LONGER MODERN VERSE

EDWARD A. PARKER

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

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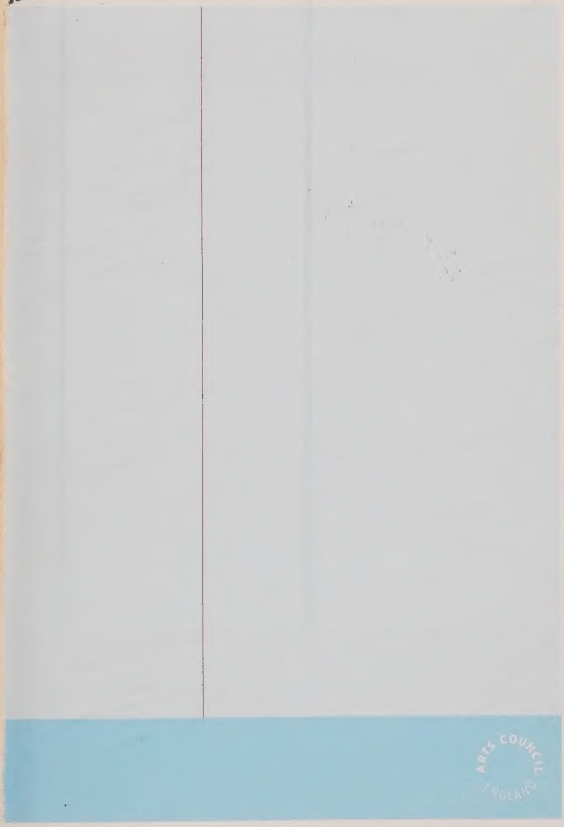

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A Book of Longer

MODERN VERSE

Selected with an Introduction

by

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ANTHOLOGY

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ORIGINS OF
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH POETRY

THE origins of poetry lie in reactions to experience of the world. A particular poet's work is his answer to questions that the Sphinx of life has set him, has set his Spirit and heart as much as his intellect.

In general, then, one may say that a representative group of poets of one period in a country gives a many-sided answer to the problems of civilization in their own day, so that the collection of poetic work in this volume may not only be enjoyed for the sake of its purely aesthetic qualities, great as they are and rightly to be enjoyed first and always, but may also be regarded as a response—poetry lovers will feel it the truest and fullest response—to the dominant and urgent aspects of contemporary life.

Consideration of contemporary poetry demands first, therefore, an examination of the matrix of national experience from which it arises, and then, afterwards, an account of the types of response to that experience, these types being represented, with individual variations, by particular poets.

First, then, a statement of those aspects of contemporary English life which are reflected in the work of certain living English poets. The 20th century in England, opening practically with the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, has begun, as centuries usually do, by reacting against its predecessor. It is not altogether chance, either, that the great Queen's decease should have released the new movement. Victoria was herself the epitome of 19th-century Victorianism, and it was

only with her passing that England could realize that one day in her national history had gone and that another was breaking.

Queen Victoria stood for three great things that 19th-century England had developed into a kind of religion, but which by 1900 had had their day and were stemming the tide of spiritual progress in the country.

The first of these three was Monarchism—a personal loyalty to the crowned head of the race which was only not a belief in the Divine Right of Kings because, unfortunately for the theory, an English king had lost his head for it two hundred years before. But this Monarchism stood on much broader claims than that of Charles the First. Charles was merely the first gentleman among gentlemen ; Queen Victoria stood also for an Empire, wider and wealthier than the earth had ever known, built up by the energies of the British Race—largely in unconsciousness, it believed—but now conscious of its immense power and prestige. Feeling the need of some outward symbol for this huge strength the nation found it in the Queen with that name so symbolic of Britain's ' victory ' over the material world of industrialism, of applied science, of colonization, of foreign politics, of Empire.

The second great factor, Ecclesiasticism, was closely related to the first, for Queen Victoria was head not only of the English State but of the English Church also. At no period of its history since Elizabeth's day had the English Church known such royalty of prestige and dignity as under Victoria. The Queen saw personally to the appointment of bishops ; those magnificent processions from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's were the patent of nobility granted by her gracious hand to the

Church of her favour as well as of her line. Every nook and corner of England in the 19th century knew and felt what this meant. The Monarchism and Ecclesiasticism of Victoria meant that, through the wide agricultural spaces, the squire and the vicar reigned supreme, coequal heads of their little State and Church by the grace of Victoria.

The third mark of the bygone century was Industrial Competition, the unnatural offspring of the philosophy of 'enlightened self-interest', of 'the greatest good of the greatest number'. It was credible that England should cleave to and practise this philosophy, for she had built her foundries and factories, her ships and her banks upon it and, partly through getting a generation's start between 1770 and 1800, had apparently beaten the world in the great new race of Competition. Characteristically enough, however, it was not of the gains accruing from this industrial victory that the Victorians boasted, for the gentleman does not jingle his money in his pocket. It was rather the reverse of the medal that was shown, Philanthropy, the hand into the pocket for any *deserving* cause. Philanthropy was blest because it showed wealth to the best advantage. It was sacrosanct. The receiving hospital or relief movement might not inquire into the origin of the wealth it received nor question the probity of the donor; it was the donor who inquired into the probity of the beggar, the purse sat in judgement on the heart.

Thus it was that, when Queen Victoria died, there passed away also an Imperialism that was almost personal, an Ecclesiasticism that recognized no faith but the Thirty-Nine Articles, and an Economics that tried to cover the face of Capitalism with a veil of Philanthropy.

If these three were characteristics of a century which England felt to have died in 1901, there was also a triad of promises which at the same time beckoned her into the future, promises that matched respectively the beliefs that were now largely outlived.

The first of these promises was Democracy, revealed in foreign relations as well as at home. British Imperialism in the 19th century had cherished a contempt for the foreigner, inherited from the days after Waterloo. The nearest foreigner geographically was the most despised, and no sharper proof of the spirit of the new age could have been offered than the receiving of the Frenchman, hitherto merely 'Froggy', into an Entente Cordiale. This meant really the democratization of foreign policy, the recognition by England that the government of the world is the right and business of all races, a recognition that has led her naturally forward to the League of Nations.

Along with foreign policy home feeling had adjusted itself. Personal loyalty to the King remained as strong as ever, but it was to a man among men. Queen Victoria had no friends, but only a royal family around the throne, no affairs save State affairs. King Edward, on the other hand, was known as both diplomat and sportsman, and that democratization of the kingly ideal King George and the Prince of Wales have developed in accord with the temper of the times, thereby not merely saving but increasing the prestige of Monarchy in its last stronghold whilst radically altering its character.

Secondly, religious changes rooted in the 19th century and even in the 18th have borne fruit in the 20th. The State Church has come out of its seclusion, recognizing, on the one hand, to some extent, the existence of other

Protestant forms of worship in the land, and on the other, approaching a mental understanding of the Church of Rome. But a far greater sphere of change lies in the development of the idea of Scientific Progress. In Biblical exegesis, in ecclesiastical and dogmatic history, evolutionary principles are taking root. The old Ecclesiasticism is being deposed and Spiritual Evolutionism is ascending the throne.

Finally, the struggle centres round economic theories. It is too early by far to say that Benthamism is dead. There are signs, however, that men are getting tired of the dirt, misery, and degeneration that competition creates, that they see that Adam Smith and Bentham have produced merely the greatest luxury of the smallest number. In the field of private business cut-throat competition, it is true, is still the law of the day. The hopeful sign of the new age is rather to be seen in international economic relations, in a groping towards some sort of economic world-federation which should be the business side of the League of Nations. As a block to achievement lies only the fact that Adam-Smithian economics, so splendid for the individual who wants to 'get on' at the expense of his fellows, threaten to break down when called upon to organize world co-operation.

This, then, is the social matrix of poetic experience in 20th-century England. Poets of our time live in a world order that is bound together by ideas of Democracy, of Evolutionism and of World-Federation. How do they respond to it? The analysis of that 'response' to or 'reflection' of contemporary life which is called its poetry is the second or more difficult consideration.

First, the reflection is not direct—the direct reflection of life in literature is found in prose. The poet does not

transcribe his experience of life straight into his verse, or, if he does, then, according to the degree of directness, it loses poetic character.

Poetry is a dream-reaction, and whatever is true of dreams in general has a direct bearing upon the understanding of the nature of poetry. A dream is, briefly, an escape of repressed mental and spiritual conflict-experience into consciousness in symbolic form. It has three essential features: first, it arises from a conflict; second, the actual nature of the conflict is unrecognized by and largely unknown to the dreamer; thirdly, the dream-expression is in symbolic pictures difficult of translation into common terms of life.

Now, this is all equally true of poetry. At the bottom of a real poem there is always a conflict in the poet's soul; the conflict is always obscure to the poet himself, sometimes unknown; the expression in the poem is always pictorial, rhythmic, and *symbolic*, not to be taken at its surface valuation as merely an attractive story or sweet word-music.

It is the reaction of the poet to his spiritual environment which causes conflict in his soul, and this reaction has shown itself in Contemporary English poetry in several forms, of which four may be distinguished for broad treatment.

The first is a reaction of Negation. Herein are included poets who find the world around them entirely hostile to their soul's health, who, in common language, 'cannot stand' modern civilization. For these the reaction expresses itself in the form of escape into other worlds of experience, with always a reflex criticism implied of the existing scheme of things. Walter de la Mare, for instance, has retired into the world of childhood and

extramundane forms, and both the substance and form of all his poetry belie the complexity and earth-hunger of present-day adults. In another way Sturge Moore has retired into other ages, the Greek, the Jewish, the Persian, but in a peculiar way, inverting the sympathies of Keats or Tennyson, and siding with the defeated and lost causes, with Amazons, Centaurs, Judas, Jacob the deceiver, hunted and slain Gazelles. So Elroy Flecker found a home for his genius in the East of the *Arabian Nights*, and Edward Thomas and Francis Ledwidge rest for theirs in the unspoilt country-side of England or Ireland.

A second type of reaction is that of Disillusionment. The poets of this order agree with the former in rejecting modern life, but disagree in that they would fight their way through in hope to found a new world on the ruins of the old in which they can no longer believe. Of such is Rupert Brooke, whose 'Grantchester' shows, along with an ironic weariness of modern coarseness, a delight in an England of idealized experience—temperamentally humorous with him—that is the especial mark of contemporary English poetry.

Third in order is the reaction of Struggle. This seems a continuation of the second, yet the poets of the third order show little disillusionment. They rather accept whatever of good they can find in existence, and strive with the stuff of life to show of what it is made and to what high purpose it can be turned. Wilfrid Gibson, John Masefield, and John Drinkwater lead this group.

Finally, there are a few poets who can give an acceptance, limited indeed yet definite, to contemporary intellectual and spiritual movements. Alfred Noyes represents this attitude most completely, finding either in the earlier glories of his country or the spiritual

career of science a basis of hope for the life of mankind. In the more modest field of homely life, touched by Brooke in 'The Great Lover', Harold Monro has marked out for himself and for poetry lovers a space of quietude and healing pleasure.

E. A. P.

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Mr. Thomas Hardy for 'The Inscription'.

The Golden Journey to Samarkand

PROLOGUE

We who with songs beguile your pilgrimage
And swear that Beauty lives though lilies die,
We Poets of the proud old lineage
Who sing to find your hearts, we know not why,—

What shall we tell you? Tales, marvellous tales
Of ships and stars and isles where good men rest,
Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales,
And winds and shadows fall toward the West:

And there the world's first huge white-bearded kings,
In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep,
And closer round their breasts the ivy clings,
Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep.

II

And how beguile you? Death has no repose
Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand
Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those
Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

And now they wait and whiten peaceably,
Those conquerors, those poets, those so fair:
They know time comes, not only you and I,
But the whole world shall whiten, here or there;

When those long caravans that cross the plain
With dauntless feet and sound of silver bells
Put forth no more for glory or for gain,
Take no more solace from the palm-girt wells;

When the great markets by the sea shut fast
  All that calm Sunday that goes on and on;
When even lovers find their peace at last,
  And Earth is but a star, that once had shone.

EPILOGUE

At the Gate of the Sun, Bagdad, in olden time

THE MERCHANTS (*together*)

Away, for we are ready to a man!
  Our camels sniff the evening and are glad.
Lead on, O Master of the Caravan:
  Lead on the Merchant-Princes of Bagdad.

THE CHIEF DRAPER

Have we not Indian carpets dark as wine,
  Turbans and sashes, gowns and bows and veils,
And broideries of intricate design,
  And printed hangings in enormous bales?

THE CHIEF GROCER

We have rose-candy, we have spikenard,
  Mastic and terebinth and oil and spice,
And such sweet jams meticulously jarred
  As God's own Prophet eats in Paradise.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

And we have manuscripts in peacock styles
  By Ali of Damascus; we have swords
Engraved with storks and apes and crocodiles,
  And heavy beaten necklaces, for Lords.

mastic] a special gum; liquor flavoured with this. terebinth] turpentine. peacock styles] a particular style of handwriting

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But you are nothing but a lot of Jews.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

Sir, even dogs have daylight, and we pay.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But who are ye in rags and rotten shoes,
You dirty-bearded, blocking up the way?

THE PILGRIMS

We are the Pilgrims, master; we shall go
Always a little further: it may be
Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow,
Across that angry or that glimmering sea,

White on a throne or guarded in a cave
There lives a prophet who can understand
Why men were born: but surely we are brave,
Who make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

THE CHIEF MERCHANT

We gnaw the nail of hurry. Master, away!

ONE OF THE WOMEN

O turn your eyes to where your children stand.
Is not Bagdad the beautiful? O stay!

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We take the Golden Road to Samarkand.

AN OLD MAN

Have you not girls and garlands in your homes,
Eunuchs and Syrian boys at your command?
Seek not excess: God hateth him who roams!

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

A Pilgrim with a Beautiful Voice

Sweet to ride forth at evening from the wells
When shadows pass gigantic on the sand,
And softly through the silence beat the bells
Along the Golden Road to Samarkand.

A Merchant

We travel not for trafficking alone:
By hotter winds our fiery hearts are fanned:
For lust of knowing what should not be known
We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

The Master of the Caravan

Open the gate, O watchman of the night!

The Watchman

Ho, travellers, I open. For what land
Leave you the dim-moon city of delight?

The Merchants (*with a shout*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

(*The Caravan passes through the gate*)

The Watchman (*consoling the women*)

What would ye, ladies? It was ever thus.
Men are unwise and curiously planned.

A Woman

They have their dreams, and do not think of us.

Voices of the Caravan

(*in the distance, singing*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

James Elroy Flecker

Drake

BOOK VI

Now like the soul of Ophir on the sea
Glittered the *Golden Hynde*, and all her heart
Turned home to England. As a child that finds
A ruby ring upon the highway, straight
Homeward desires to run with it, so she
Yearned for her home and country. Yet the world
Was all in arms behind her. Fleet on fleet
Awaited her return. Along the coast
The very churches melted down their chimes
And cast them into cannon. To the South
A thousand cannon watched Magellan's straits,
And fleets were scouring all the sea like hounds,
With orders that where'er they came on Drake,
Although he were the Dragon of their dreams,
They should out-blast his thunders and convey,
Dead or alive, his body back to Spain.

And Drake laughed out and said, 'My trusty lads
Of Devon, you have made the wide world ring
With England's name; you have swept one half the seas
From sky to sky; and in our oaken hold
You have packed the gorgeous Indies. We shall sail
But slowly with such wealth. If we return,
We are one against ten thousand! We will seek
The fabled Northern passage, take our gold
Safe home; then out to sea again and try
Our guns against their guns.'

. . . . . .

And as they sailed
Northward, they swooped on warm blue Guatulco

For food and water. Nigh the dreaming port
The grand alcaldes in high conclave sat
Blazing with gold and scarlet, as they tried
A batch of negro slaves upon the charge
Of idleness in Spanish mines; dumb slaves,
With bare scarred backs and labour-broken knees,
And sorrowful eyes like those of wearied kine
Spent from the ploughing. Even as the judge
Rose to condemn them to the knotted lash
The British boat's crew, quiet and compact,
Entered the court. The grim judicial glare
Grew wider with amazement, and the judge
Staggered against his gilded throne.

'I thank
Almighty God,' cried Drake, 'who hath given me this
—That I who once, in ignorance, procured
Slaves for the golden bawdy-house of Spain,
May now, in England's name, help to requite
That wrong. For now I say in England's name,
Where'er her standard flies, the slave shall stand
Upright, the shackles fall from off his limbs.
Unyoke the prisoners: tell them they are men
Once more, not beasts of burden. Set them free;
But take these gold and scarlet popinjays
Aboard my *Golden Hynde*; and let them write
An order that their town shall now provide
My boats with food and water.'

This being done,
The slaves being placed in safety on the prize,
The *Golden Hynde* revictualled and the casks
Replenished with fresh water, Drake set free

alcaldes] magistrates.

The judges and swept Northward once again ;
And, off the coast of Nicaragua, found
A sudden treasure better than all gold ;
For on the track of the China trade they caught
A ship whereon two China pilots sailed,
And in their cabin lay the secret charts,
Red hieroglyphs of Empire, unknown charts,
Of silken sea-roads down the golden West
Where all roads meet and East and West are one.
And, with that mystery stirring in their hearts
Like a strange cry from home, Northward they swept
And Northward, till the soft luxurious coasts
Hardened, the winds grew bleak, the great green waves
Loomed high like mountains round them, and the spray
Froze on their spars and yards. Fresh from the warmth
Of tropic seas the men could hardly brook
That cold ; and when the floating hills of ice
Like huge green shadows crowned with ghostly snow
Went past them with strange whispers in the gloom,
Or took mysterious colours in the dawn,
Their hearts misgave them ; and they found no way ;
But all was iron shore and icy sea.
And one by one the crew fell sick to death
In that fierce winter, and the land still ran
Westward and showed no passage. Tossed with storms,
Onward they plunged, or furrowed gentler tides
Of ice-lit emerald that made the prow
A faery beak of some enchanted ship
Flinging wild rainbows round her as she drove
Thro' seas unsailed by mortal mariners,
Past isles unhailed of any human voice,
Where sound and silence mingled in one song
Of utter solitude. Ever as they went

The flag of England blazoned the broad breeze,
Northward, where never ship had sailed before,
Northward, till lost in helpless wonderment,
Dazed as a soul awakening from the dream
Of death to some wild dawn in Paradise
(Yet burnt with cold as they whose very tears
Freeze on their faces where Cocytus wails)
All world-worn, bruised, wing-broken, wracked, and wrenched,
Blackened with lightning, scarred as with evil deeds,
But all embalmed in beauty by that sun
Which never sets, bosomed in peace at last
The *Golden Hynde* rocked on a glittering calm.
Seas that no ship had ever sailed, from sky
To glistening sky, swept round them. Glory and gleam,
Glamour and lucid rapture and diamond air
Embraced her broken spars, begrimed with gold
Her gloomy hull, rocking upon a sphere
New made, it seemed, mysterious with the first
Mystery of the world, where holy sky
And sacred sea shone like the primal Light
Of God, a-stir with whispering sea-bird's wings
And glorious with clouds. Only, all day,
All night, the rhythmic utterance of His will
In the deep sigh of seas, that washed His throne,
Rose and relapsed across Eternity,
Timed to the pulse of aeons. All their world
Seemed strange as unto us the great new heavens
And glittering shores, if on some aery bark
To Saturn's coasts we came and traced no more
The tiny gleam of our familiar earth
Far off, but heard tremendous oceans roll
Round unimagined continents, and saw

Terrible mountains unto which our Alps
Were less than mole-hills, and such gaunt ravines
Cleaving them and such cataracts roaring down
As burst the gates of our earth-moulded senses,
Pour the eternal glory on our souls,
And, while ten thousand chariots bring the dawn,
Hurl us poor midgets trembling to our knees.
Glory and glamour and rapture of lucid air,
Ice cold, with subtle colours of the sky
Embraced her broken spars, belted her hulk
With brilliance, while she dipped her jacinth beak
In waves of mounded splendour, and sometimes
A great ice-mountain flashed and floated by
Throned on the waters, pinnacled and crowned
With all the smouldering jewels in the world;
Or in the darkness, glimmering berg on berg,
All emerald to the moon, went by like ghosts
Whispering to the South.
There, as they lay,
Waiting a wind to fill the stiffened sails,
Their hearts remembered that in England now
The Spring was nigh, and in that lonely sea
The skilled musicians filled their eyes with home.

SONG

I

It is the Spring-tide now!
Under the hawthorn-bough
The milkmaid goes:
Her eyes are violets blue
Washed with the morning dew,
Her mouth a rose.
It is the Spring-tide now.

II

The lanes are growing sweet,
The lambkins frisk and bleat
In all the meadows:
The glossy dappled kine
Blink in the warm sunshine,
Cooling their shadows.
It is the Spring-tide now.

III

Soon hand in sunburnt hand
Thro' God's green fairyland,
England, our home,
Whispering as they stray
Adown the primrose way,
Lovers will roam.
It is the Spring-tide now.

And then, with many a chain of linkéd sweetness,
Harmonious gold, they drew their hearts and souls
Back, back to England, thoughts of wife and child,
Mother and sweetheart and the old companions,
The twisted streets of London and the deep
Delight of Devon lanes, all softly voiced
In words or cadences, made them breathe hard
And gaze across the everlasting sea,
Craving for that small isle so far away.

SONG

I

O, you beautiful land,
Deep-bosomed with beeches and bright
With the flowery largesse of May
Sweet from the palm of her hand
Out-flung, till the hedges grew white
As the green-arched billows with spray.

II

White from the fall of her feet
The daisies awake in the sun!
Cliff-side and valley and plain
With the breath of the thyme growing sweet
Laugh, for the Spring is begun;
And Love hath turned homeward again.

O, you beautiful land! &c.

III

Where should the home be of Love,
But there, where the hawthorn-tree blows,
And the milkmaid trips out with her pail,
And the skylark in heaven above
Sings, till the West is a rose
And the East is a nightingale?

O, you beautiful land! &c.

IV

There where the sycamore trees
Are shading the satin-skinned kine,
And oaks, whose brethren of old
Conquered the strength of the seas,
Grow broad in the sunlight and shine
Crowned with their cressets of gold;

O, you beautiful land! &c.

V

Deep-bosomed with beeches and bright
With rose-coloured cloudlets above;
Billowing broad and grand
Where the meadows with blossoms are white
For the foot-fall, the foot-fall of Love.
O, you beautiful land!

cresset] vessel for holding oil for light.

VI

How should we sing of thy beauty,
England, mother of men,
We that can look in thine eyes
And see there the splendour of duty
Deep as the depth of their ken,
Wide as the ring of thy skies.

VII

O, you beautiful land,
Deep-bosomed with beeches and bright
With the flowery largesse of May
Sweet from the palm of her hand
Out-flung, till the hedges grew white
As the green-arched billows with spray.
O, you beautiful land!

And when a fair wind rose again, there seemed
No hope of passage by that fabled way
Northward, and suddenly Drake put down his helm
And, with some wondrous purpose in his eyes,
Turned Southward once again, until he found
A lonely natural harbour on the coast
Near San Francisco, where the cliffs were white
Like those of England, and the soft soil teemed
With gold. There they careened the *Golden Hynde*—
Her keel being thick with barnacles and weeds—
And built a fort and dockyard to refit
Their little wandering home, not half so large
As many a coasting barque to-day that scarce
Would cross the Channel, yet she had swept the seas
Of half the world, and even now prepared
For new adventures greater than them all.
And as the sound of chisel and hammer broke
The stillness of that shore, shy figures came,

Keen-faced and grave-eyed Indians, from the woods
To bow before the strange white-faced new-comers
As gods. Whereat the chaplain much aghast
Persuaded them with signs and broken words
And grunts that even Drake was but a man,
Whom none the less the savages would crown
With woven flowers and barbarous ritual
King of New Albion—so the seamen called
That land, remembering the white cliffs of home.
Much they implored, with many a sigh and cry,
Which by the rescued slaves upon the prize
Were part interpreted, that Drake would stay
And rule them ; and the vision of the great
Empire of Englishmen arose and flashed
A moment round them, on that lonely shore.
A small and weather-beaten band they stood,
Bronzed seamen by the laughing rescued slaves,
Ringed with gigantic loneliness and saw
An Empire that should liberate the world :
A Power before the lightning of whose arms
Darkness should die and all oppression cease ;
A Federation of the strong and weak,
Whereby the weak were strengthened and the strong
Made stronger in the increasing good of all ;
A gathering up of one another's loads ;
A turning of the wasteful rage of war
To accomplish large and fruitful tasks of peace,
Even as the strength of some great stream is turned
To grind the corn for bread. E'en thus on England
That splendour dawned which those in dreams foresaw
And saw not with their living eyes, but thou,
England, mayst lift up eyes at last and see,
Who, like that angel of the Apocalypse,

Hast set one foot upon thy sea-girt isle,
The other upon the waters, and canst raise
Now, if thou wilt, above the assembled nations,
The trumpet of deliverance to thy lips.

. . . . . .

At last their task was done, the *Golden Hynde*
Undocked, her white wings hoisted ; and away
Westward they swiftly glided from that shore
Where, with a wild lament, their Indian friends,
Knee-deep i' the creaming foam, all stood at gaze
Like men that for one moment in their lives
Have seen a mighty drama cross their path
And played upon the stage of vast events
Knowing, henceforward, all their life is nought.
But Westward sped the little *Golden Hynde*
Across the uncharted ocean, with no guide
But that great homing cry of all their hearts.
Far out of sight of land they steered, straight out
Across the great Pacific, in those days
When even the compass proved no trusty guide,
Straight out they struck in that small bark, straight out
Week after week, without one glimpse of aught
But heaving seas, across the uncharted waste
Straight to the sunset. Laughingly they sailed,
With all that gorgeous booty in their holds,
A splendour dragging deep through seas of doom,
A prey to the first great hurricane that blew
Except their God averted it. And still
Their skilled musicians cheered the way along
To shores beyond the sunset and the sea.
And oft at nights, the yellow fo'c'sle lanthorn
Swung over swarthy singing faces grouped
Within the four small wooden walls that made

Their home and shut them from the unfathomable
Depths of mysterious gloom without that rolled
All round them ; or Tom Moone would heartily troll
A simple stave that struggled oft with thoughts
Beyond its reach, yet reached their hearts no less.

SONG

I

Good luck befall you, mariners all
That sail this world so wide !
Whither we go, not yet we know :
We steer by wind and tide.
Be it right or wrong, I sing this song ;
For now it seems to me
Men steer their souls thro' rocks and shoals
As mariners use by sea.

Chorus : *As mariners use by sea,*
My lads,
As mariners use by sea !

II

And now they plough to windward, now
They drive before the gale !
Now are they hurled across the world
With torn and tattered sail ;
Yet, as they will, they steer and still
Defy the world's rude glee :
Till death o'erwhelm them, mast and helm,
They ride and rule the sea.

Chorus : *They ride and rule the sea,*
My lads,
They ride and rule the sea !

. . . . . .

Meantime, in England, Bess of Sydenham,
Drake's love and queen, being told that Drake was dead,
And numbed with grief, obeying her father's will
That dreadful summer morn in bridal robes
Had passed to wed her father's choice. The sun
Streamed smiling on her as she went, half-dazed,
Amidst her smiling maids. Nigh to the sea
The church was, and the mellow marriage bells
Mixed with its music. Far away, white sails
Spangled the sapphire, white as flying blossoms
New-fallen from her crown; but as the glad
And sad procession neared the little church,
From some strange ship-of-war, far out at sea,
There came a sudden tiny puff of smoke—
And then a dull strange throb, a whistling hiss,
And scarce a score of yards away a shot
Ploughed up the turf. None knew, none ever knew
From whence it came, whether a perilous jest
Of English seamen, or a wanton deed
Of Spaniards, or mere accident; but all
Her maids in flight were scattered. Bess awoke
As from a dream, crying aloud—'' 'Tis he,
'Tis he that sends this message. He is not dead.
I will not pass the porch. Nay, take me home,
'Twas he that sent that message.'
Nought availed,
Her father's wrath, her mother's tears, her maids'
Cunning persuasions, nought; home she returned,
And waited for the dead to come to life;
Nor waited long; for ere that month was out,
Rumour on rumour reached the coasts of England,
Borne as it seemed on sea-birds' wings, that Drake
Was on his homeward way.

ALFRED NOYES

Rivers

Rivers I have seen which were beautiful,
Slow rivers winding in the flat fens,
With bands of reeds like thronged green swords
Guarding the mirrored sky;
And streams down-tumbling from the chalk hills
To valleys of meadows and watercress-beds,
And bridges whereunder, dark weed-coloured shadows,
Trout flit or lie.

I know those rivers that peacefully glide
Past old towers and shaven gardens,
Where mottled walls rise from the water
And mills all streaked with flour;
And rivers with wharves and rusty shipping,
That flow with a stately tidal motion
Towards their destined estuaries
Full of the pride of power;

Noble great rivers, Thames and Severn,
Tweed with his gateway of many grey arches,
Clyde, dying at sunset westward
In a sea as red as blood;
Rhine and his hills in close procession,
Placid Elbe, Seine slaty and swirling,
And Isar, son of the Alpine snows,
A furious turquoise flood.

All these I have known, and with slow eyes
I have walked on their shores and watched them
And softened to their beauty and loved them
Wherever my feet have been;

And a hundred others also
Whose names long since grew into me,
That, dreaming in light or darkness,
I have seen, though I have not seen.

Those rivers of thought: cold Ebro,
And blue racing Guadiana,
Passing white houses, high-balconied,
That ache in a sun-baked land,
Congo, and Nile and Colorado,
Niger, Indus, Zambesi,
And the Yellow River, and the Oxus,
And the river that dies in sand.

What splendours are theirs, what continents,
What tribes of men, what basking plains,
Forests and lion-hided deserts,
Marshes, ravines and falls:
All hues and shapes and tempers
Wandering they take as they wander
From those far springs that endlessly
The far sea calls.

O in reverie I know the Volga
That turns his back upon Europe,
And the two great cities on his banks,
Novgorod and Astrakhan;
Where the world is a few soft colours,
And under the dove-like evening
The boatmen chant ancient songs,
The tenderest known to man.

And the holy river Ganges,
His fretted cities veiled in moonlight,

Arches and buttresses silver-shadowy
In the high moon,
And palms grouped in the moonlight
And fanes girdled with cypresses,
Their domes of marble softly shining
To the high silver moon.

And that aged Brahmapootra
Who beyond the white Himalayas
Passes many a lamassery
On rocks forlorn and frore,
A block of gaunt grey stone walls
With rows of little barred windows,
Where shrivelled young monks in yellow silk
Are hidden for evermore. . . .

But O that great river, the Amazon,
I have sailed up its gulf with eyelids closed,
And the yellow waters tumbled round,
And all was rimmed with sky,
Till the banks drew in, and the trees' heads,
And the lines of green grew higher
And I breathed deep, and there above me
The forest wall stood high.

Those forest walls of the Amazon
Are level under the blazing blue
And yield no sound but the whistles and shrieks
Of the swarming bright macaws ;
And under their lowest drooping boughs
Mud-banks torpidly bubble,
And the water drifts, and logs in the water
Drift and twist and pause.

lamassery] Tibetan monastery.

And everywhere, tacitly joining,
Float noiseless tributaries,
Tall avenues paved with water :
    And as I silent fly
The vegetation like a painted scene,
Spars and spikes and monstrous fans
And ferns from hairy sheaths up-springing,
    Evenly passes by.

And stealthier stagnant channels
Under low niches of drooping leaves
Coil into deep recesses :
    And there have I entered, there
To heavy, hot, dense, dim places
Where creepers climb and sweat and climb,
And the drip and splash of oozing water
    Loads the stifling air.

Rotting scrofulous steaming trunks,
Great horned emerald beetles crawling,
Ants and huge slow butterflies
    That had strayed and lost the sun ;
Ah, sick I have swooned as the air thickened
To a pallid brown ecliptic glow,
And on the forest, fallen with languor,
    Thunder has begun.

Thunder in the dun dusk, thunder
Rolling and battering and cracking,
The caverns shudder with a terrible glare
    Again and again and again,
Till the land bows in the darkness,
Utterly lost and defenceless,
Smitten and blinded and overwhelmed
    By the crashing rods of rain.

And then in the forests of the Amazon,
When the rain has ended, and silence come,
What dark luxuriance unfolds
From behind the night's drawn bars :
The wreathing odours of a thousand trees
And the flowers' faint gleaming presences,
And over the clearings and the still waters
Soft indigo and hanging stars.

. . . . . .

O many and many are rivers,
And beautiful are all rivers,
And lovely is water everywhere
That leaps or glides or stays ;
Yet by starlight, moonlight, or sunlight,
Long, long though they look, these wandering eyes,
Even on the fairest waters of dream,
Never untroubled gaze.

For whatever stream I stand by,
And whatever river I dream of,
There is something still in the back of my mind
From very far away ;
There is something I saw and see not,
A country full of rivers
That stirs in my heart and speaks to me
More sure, more dear than they.

And always I ask and wonder
(Though often I do not know it) :
Why does this water not smell like water ?
Where is the moss that grew
Wet and dry on the slabs of granite
And the round stones in clear brown water ?

—And a pale film rises before them
Of the rivers that first I knew.

Though famous are the rivers of the great world,
Though my heart from those alien waters drinks
Delight however pure from their loveliness,
And awe however deep,
Would I wish for a moment the miracle
That those waters should come to Chagford,
Or gather and swell in Tavy Cleave
Where the stones cling to the steep?

No, even were they Ganges and Amazon
In all their great might and majesty,
League upon league of wonders,
I would lose them all, and more,
For a light chiming of small bells,
A twisting flash in the granite,
The tiny thread of a pixie waterfall
That lives by Vixen Tor.

Those rivers in that lost country,
They were brown as a clear brown head is,
Or red with the earth that rain washed down,
Or white with china-clay;
And some tossed foaming over boulders,
And some curved mild and tranquil,
In wooded vales securely set
Under the fond warm day.

Okement and Erme and Avon,
Exe and his ruffled shallows,
I could cry as I think of those rivers
That knew my morning dreams;

The weir by Tavistock at evening
When the circling woods were purple,
And the Lowman in spring with the lent-lilies,
And the little moorland streams.

For many a hillside streamlet
There falls with a broken tinkle,
Falling and dying, falling and dying,
In little cascades and pools,
Where the world is furze and heather
And flashing plovers and fixed larks,
And an empty sky, whitish blue,
That small world rules.

There, there, where the high waste bog-lands
And the drooping slopes and the spreading valleys,
The orchards and the cattle-sprinkled pastures
Those travelling musics fill,
There is my lost Abana,
And there is my nameless Pharphar
That mixed with my heart when I was a boy,
And time stood still.

And I say I will go there and die there :
But I do not go there, and sometimes
I think that the train could not carry me there,
And it 's possible, maybe,
That it 's farther than Asia or Africa,
Or any voyager's harbour,
Farther, farther, beyond recall. . . .
O even in memory !

J. C. Squire

The River

All other waters have their time of peace,
Calm, or the turn of tide or summer drought;
But on these bars the tumults never cease,
In violent death this river passes out.

Brimming she goes, a bloody-coloured rush
Hurrying her heaped disorder, rank on rank,
Bubbleless speed so still that in the hush
One hears the mined earth dropping from the bank,

Slipping in little falls whose tingeings drown,
Sunk by the waves for ever pressing on,
Till with a stripping crash the tree goes down,
Its washing branches flounder and are gone.

Then, roaring out aloud, her water spreads,
Making a desolation where her waves
Shriek and give battle, tossing up their heads,
Tearing the shifting sandbanks into graves,

Changing the raddled ruin of her course
So swiftly, that the pilgrim on the shore
Hears the loud whirlpool laughing like a horse
Where the scurfed sand was parched an hour before.

And always underneath that heaving tide
The changing bottom runs, or piles, or quakes,
Flinging immense heaps up to wallow wide,
Sucking the surface into whirls like snakes.

raddled] reddened.

If anything should touch that shifting sand,
All the blind bottom sucks it till it sinks ;
It takes the clipper ere she comes to land,
It takes the thirsting tiger as he drinks.

And on the river pours—it never tires ;
Blind, hungry, screaming, day and night the same
Purposeless hurry of a million ires,
Mad as the wind, as merciless as flame.

. . . . . .

There was a full-rigged ship, the *Travancore*,
Towing to port against that river's rage—
A glittering ship made sparkling for the shore,
Taut to the pins in all her equipage.

Clanging, she topped the tide ; her sails were furled,
Her men came loitering downwards from the yards ;
They who had brought her half across the world,
Trampling so many billows into shards,

Now looking up, beheld their duty done,
The ship approaching port, the great masts bare,
Gaunt as three giants striding in the sun,
Proud with the colours tailing out like hair.

So, having coiled their gear, they left the deck ;
Within the fo'c's'le's gloom of banded steel,
Mottled like wood with many a painted speck,
They brought their plates and sat about a meal.

Then pushing back the tins, they lit their pipes,
Or slept, or played at cards, or gently spoke,
Light from the portholes shot in dusty stripes
Tranquilly moving, sometimes blue with smoke.

pins] pegs.

These sunbeams sidled when the vessel rolled,
Their lazy yellow dust-strips crossed the floor,
Lighting a manhole leading to the hold,
A manhole leaded down the day before.

Like gold the solder on the manhole shone;
A few flies threading in a drowsy dance
Slept in their pattern, darted, and were gone.
The river roared against the ship's advance.

And quietly sleep came upon the crew,
Man by man drooped upon his arms and slept;
Without, the tugboat dragged the vessel through,
The rigging whined, the yelling water leapt,

Till blindly a careering wave's collapse
Rose from beneath her bows and spouted high,
Spirting the fo'c's'le floor with noisy slaps;
A sleeper at the table heaved a sigh,

And lurched, half-drunk with sleep, across the floor,
Muttering and blinking like a man insane,
Cursed at the river's tumult, shut the door,
Blinked, and lurched back and fell asleep again.

Then there was greater silence in the room,
Ship's creakings ran along the beams and died,
The lazy sunbeams loitered up the gloom,
Stretching and touching till they reached the side.

. . . . . .

Yet something jerking in the vessel's course
Told that the tug was getting her in hand
As, at a fence, one steadies down a horse,
To rush the whirlpool on Magellan Sand;

And in the uneasy water just below
Her Mate inquired ' if the men should stir
And come on deck ? ' Her Captain answered, ' No,
Let them alone, the tug can manage her.'

Then, as she settled down and gathered speed,
Her Mate inquired again ' if they should come
Just to be ready there in case of need,
Since, on such godless bars, there might be some.'

But ' No ', the Captain said, ' the men have been
Boxing about since midnight, let them be.
The pilot 's able and the ship 's a queen,
The hands can rest until we come to quay.'

They ceased, they took their stations ; right ahead
The whirlpool heaped and sucked ; in tenor tone
The steady leadsman chanted at the lead,
The ship crept forward trembling to the bone.

And just above the worst a passing wave
Brought to the line such unexpected stress
That as she tossed her bows her towrope gave,
Snapped at the collar like a stalk of cress.

Then, for a ghastly moment, she was loose,
Blind in the whirlpool, groping for a guide,
Swinging adrift without a moment's truce,
She struck the sand and fell upon her side.

And instantly the sand beneath her gave
So that she righted and again was flung,
Grinding the quicksand open for a grave,
Straining her masts until the steel was sprung.

The foremast broke ; its mighty bulk of steel
Fell on the fo'c's'le door and jammed it tight ;
The sand-rush heaped her to an even keel,
She settled down, resigned, she made no fight,

But, like an overladen beast, she lay
Dumb in the mud with billows at her lips,
Broken, where she had fallen in the way,
Grinding her grave among the bones of ships.

. . . . . .

At the first crashing of the mast, the men
Sprang from their sleep to hurry to the deck ;
They found that Fate had caught them in a pen,
The door that opened out was jammed with wreck.

Then, as with shoulders down, their gathered strength
Hove on the door, but could not make it stir,
They felt the vessel tremble through her length ;
The tug, made fast again, was plucking her.

Plucking, and causing motion, till it seemed
That she would get her off ; they heard her screw
Mumble the bubbled rip-rap as she steamed ;
' Please God, the tug will shift her ! ' said the crew.

' She 's off ! ' the seamen said ; they felt her glide,
Scraping the bottom with her bilge, until
Something collapsing clanged along her side ;
The scraping stopped, the tugboat's screw was still.

' She 's holed ! ' a voice without cried ; ' holed and jammed—
Holed on the old *Magellan*, sunk last June.
I lose my ticket and the men are damned ;
They'll drown like rats unless we free them soon.

'My God, they shall not!' and the speaker beat
Blows with a crow upon the foremast's wreck;
Minute steel splinters fell about his feet,
No tremor stirred the ruin on the deck.

And as their natures bade, the seamen learned
That they were doomed within that buried door;
Some cursed, some raved, but one among them turned
Straight to the manhole leaded in the floor,

And, sitting down astride it, drew his knife,
And staidly dug to pick away the lead,
While at the ports his fellows cried for life:
'Burst in the door, or we shall all be dead!'

For like a brook the leak below them clucked.
They felt the vessel settling; they could feel
How the blind bog beneath her gripped and sucked.
Their fingers beat their prison walls of steel.

And then the gurgling stopped—the ship was still.
She stayed; she sank no deeper—an arrest
Fothered the pouring leak; she ceased to fill.
She trod the mud, drowned only to the breast.

And probing at the well, the captain found
The leak no longer rising, so he cried:
'She is not sinking—you will not be drowned;
The shifting sand has silted up her side.

'Now there is time. The tug shall put ashore
And fetch explosives to us from the town;
I'll burst the house or blow away the door
(It will not kill you if you all lie down).

Fothered] stopped, as if by introducing oakum or rope-yarn.

'Be easy in your minds, for you'll be free
As soon as we've the blast.' The seamen heard
The tug go townwards, butting at the sea;
Some lit their pipes, the youngest of them cheered.

But still the digger bent above the lid,
Gouging the solder from it as at first,
Pecking the lead, intent on what he did;
The other seamen mocked at him or cursed.

And some among them nudged him as he picked.
He cursed them, grinning, but resumed his game;
His knife-point sometimes struck the lid and clicked.
The solder-pellets shone like silver flame.

And still his knife-blade clicked like ticking time
Counting the hour till the tug's return,
And still the ship stood steady on the slime,
While Fate above her fingered with her urn.

. . . . . .

Then from the tug beside them came the hail:
'They have none at the stores, nor at the dock,
Nor at the quarry, so I tried the gaol.
They thought they had, but it was out of stock.

'So then I telephoned to town; they say
They've sent an engine with some to the pier;
I did not leave till it was on its way,
A tug is waiting there to bring it here:

'It can't be here, though, for an hour or more;
I've lost an hour in trying, as it is.
For want of thought commend me to the shore.
You'd think they'd know their river's ways by this.'

'So there is nothing for it but to wait,'
The Captain answered, fuming. 'Until then,
We'd better go to dinner, Mr. Mate.'
The cook brought dinner forward to the men.

. . . . . .

Another hour of prison loitered by;
The strips of sunlight stiffened at the port,
But still the digger made the pellets fly,
Paying no heed to his companions' sport,

While they, about him, spooning at their tins,
Asked if he dug because he found it cold,
Or whether it was penance for his sins,
Or hope of treasure in the forward hold.

He grinned and cursed, but did not cease to pick,
His sweat dropped from him when he bent his head,
His knife-blade quarried down, till with a click
Its grinded thinness snapped against the lead.

Then, dully rising, brushing back his sweat,
He asked his fellows for another knife.
'Never', they said; 'man, what d'ye hope to get?'
'Nothing', he said, 'except a chance for life.'

'Havers,' they said, and one among them growled,
'You'll get no knife from any here to break.
You've dug the manhole since the door was fouled,
And now your knife 's broke, quit, for Jesus' sake.'

But one, who smelt a bargain, changed his tone,
Offering a sheath-knife for the task in hand
At twenty times its value, as a loan
To be repaid him when they reached the land.

And there was jesting at the lender's greed
And mockery at the digger's want of sense,
Closing with such a bargain without need,
Since in an hour the tug would take them thence.

But ' Right,' the digger said. The deal was made,
He took the borrowed knife, and sitting down
Gouged at the channelled solder with the blade,
Saying, ' Let be, it 's better dig than drown.'

And nothing happened for a while ; the heat
Grew in the stuffy room, the sunlight slid,
Flies buzzed about and jostled at the meat,
The knife-blade clicked upon the manhole lid :

And one man said, ' She takes a hell of time
Bringing the blaster,' and another snored ;
One, between pipe-puffs, hummed a smutty rhyme,
One, who was weaving, thudded with his sword.

It was as though the ship were in a dream,
Caught in a magic ocean, calm like death,
Tranced, till a presence should arise and gleam,
Making the waters conscious with her breath.

It was so drowsy that the river's cries,
Roaring aloud their ever-changing tune,
Came to those sailors like the drone of flies,
Filling with sleep the summer afternoon.

So that they slept, or, if they spoke, it was
Only to worry lest the tug should come :
Such power upon the body labour has
That prison seemed a blessed rest to some,

Till one man leaning at the port-hole, stared,
Checking his yawning at the widest stretch,
Then blinked and swallowed, while he muttered, scared,
'That blasting-cotton takes an age to fetch.'

Then swiftly passing from the port he went
Up and then down the fo'c's'le till he stayed,
Fixed at the port-hole with his eyes intent,
Round-eyed and white, as if he were afraid,

And muttered as he stared, 'My God! she is.
She 's deeper than she was, she 's settling down.
That palm-tree top was steady against this,
And now I see the quay below the town.

'Look here at her. She 's sinking in her tracks.
She 's going down by inches as she stands;
The water 's darker and it stinks like flax,
Her going down is churning up the sands.'

And instantly a panic took the crew,
Even the digger blenched; his knife-blade's haste
Cutting the solder witnessed that he knew
Time on the brink with not a breath to waste.

While far away the tugboat at the quay
Under her drooping pennon waited still
For that explosive which would set them free,
Free, with the world a servant to their will.

Then from a boat beside them came a blare,
Urging that tugboat to be quick; and men
Shouted to stir her from her waiting there,
'Hurry the blast, and get us out of pen.

'She 's going down. She 's going down, man! Quick!'
The tugboat did not stir, no answer came;
They saw her tongue-like pennon idly lick
Clear for an instant, lettered with her name,

Then droop again. The engine had not come,
The blast had not arrived. The prisoned hands
Saw her still waiting though their time had come,
Their ship was going down among the sands,

Going so swiftly now, that they could see
The banks arising as she made her bed;
Full of sick sound she settled deathward, she
Gurgled and shook, the digger picked the lead.

And, as she paused to take a final plunge,
Prone like a half-tide rock, the men on deck
Jumped to their boats and left, ere like a sponge
The river's rotten heart absorbed the wreck;

And on the perilous instant ere Time struck
The digger's work was done, the lead was cleared,
He cast the manhole up; below it muck
Floated, the hold was full, the water leered.

All of his labour had but made a hole
By which to leap to death; he saw black dust
Float on the bubbles of that brimming bowl,
He drew a breath and took his life in trust,

And plunged head foremost into that black pit,
Where floating cargo bumped against the beams.
He groped a choking passage blind with grit,
The roaring in his ears was shot with screams.

So, with a bursting heart and roaring ears
He floundered in that sunk ship's inky womb,
Drowned in deep water for what seemed like years,
Buried alive and groping through the tomb,

Till suddenly the beams against his back
Gave, and the water on his eyes was bright ;
He shot up through a hatchway foul with wrack
Into clean air and life and dazzling light,

And striking out, he saw the fo'c's'le gone,
Vanished, below the water, and the mast
Standing columnar from the sea ; it shone
Proud, with its colours flying to the last.

And all about, a many-wrinkled tide
Smoothed and erased its eddies, wandering chilled,
Like glutted purpose, trying to decide
If its achievement had been what it willed.

And men in boats were there ; they helped him in.
He gulped for breath and watched that patch of smooth,
Shaped like the vessel, wrinkle into grin,
Furrow to waves and bare a yellow tooth.

Then the masts leaned until the shroud-screws gave,
All disappeared—her masts, her colours, all.
He saw the yardarms tilting to the grave ;
He heard the siren of a tugboat call,

And saw her speeding, foaming at the bow,
Bringing the blast-charge that had come too late.
He heard one shout, ' It isn't wanted now.'
Time's minute-hand had been the hand of Fate.

shroud-screws] that fasten the ropes from a ship's side to the mast-head.

Then the boats turned ; they brought him to the shore.
Men crowded round him, touched him, and were kind ;
The Mate walked with him, silent, to the store.
He said, ' We've left the best of us behind.'

Then, as he wrung his sodden clothes, the Mate
Gave him a drink of rum, and talked awhile
Of men and ships and unexpected Fate ;
And darkness came and cloaked the river's guile,

So that its huddled hurry was not seen,
Only made louder, till the full moon climbed
Over the forest, floated, and was queen.
Within the town a temple-belfry chimed.

Then, upon silent pads, a tiger crept
Down to the river-brink, and crouching there
Watched it intently, till you thought he slept
But for his ghastly eye and stiffened hair.

Then, trembling at a lust more fell than his,
He roared and bounded back to coverts lone,
Where, among moonlit beauty, slaughter is,
Filling the marvellous night with myriad groan.

JOHN MASEFIELD

The Lighthouse

Just as my watch was done, the fog had lifted ;
And we could see the flashing of our light ;
And see, once more, the reef beyond the Head,
O'er which, six days and nights, the mist had drifted—
Six days and nights in thick white mist had drifted,
Until it seemed all time to mist had drifted,
And day and night were but one blind white night.

But on the seventh midnight the wind shifted :
And I was glad to tumble into bed,
Thankful to hear no more the blaring horn,
That ceaselessly had sounded, night and morn,
With moaning echoes through the mist, to warn
The blind, bewildered ships at sea :
Yet, though as tired as any dog,
I lay awhile, and seemed to feel
Fog lying on my eyes still heavily ;
And still, the horn unceasingly
Sang through my head, till gradually
Through night's strange stillness, over me
Sweet sleep began to steal,
Sleep, blind and thick and fleecy as the fog.

For all I knew, I might have slept
A moment, or eternity ;
When, startled by a crash,
I waked to find I'd leapt
Upright on the floor :
And stood there, listening to the smash
Of falling glass . . . and then a thud
Of something heavy tumbling

Into the next room . . .
A pad of naked feet . . .
A moan . . . a sound of stumbling . . .
A heavier thud . . . and then no more.
And I stood shivering in the gloom,
With creeping flesh, and tingling blood,
Until I gave myself a shake
To bring my wits more wide awake ;
And lit a lantern, and flung wide the door.
Half-dazed, and dazzled by the light,
At first it seemed I'ld only find
A broken pane, a flapping blind :
But when I raised the lantern o'er my head,
I saw a naked boy upon the bed,
Who crouched and shuddered on the folded sheet ;
And, on his face, before my feet,
A naked man, who lay as if quite dead,
Though on his broken knuckles blood was red :
And all my wits awakened at the sight.

I set the lantern down ; and took the child,
Who looked at me, with piteous eyes and wild ;
And chafed his chill, wet body, till it glowed ;
And forcing spirit 'twixt his chattering teeth,
I tucked him snugly in beneath
The blankets, and soon left him warmly stowed :
And stooped to tend the man, who lay
Still senseless on the floor.
I turned him off his face ;
And laid him on the other bed ;
And washed and staunched his wound.
And yet for all that I could do,
I could not bring him to,

Or see a trace
Of life returning to that heavy head.

It seemed he'd swooned,
When through the window he'd made way,
Just having strength to lay
The boy in safety. Still as death,
He lay, without a breath:
And seeing I could do no more
To help him in the fight for life;
I turned again to tend the lad;
And, as I looked on him, was glad
To find him sleeping quietly.

So, fetching fuel, I lit a fire:
And quickly had as big a blaze
As any housewife could desire:
Then 'twixt the beds I set a chair,
That I might watch until they stirred:
And as I saw them lying there—
The sleeping boy, and him who lay
In that strange stiller sleep, 'twas plain
That they were son and father, now
I'd time to look, and wonder how,
In such a desperate plight,
Without a stitch or rag,
They'd taken refuge from the night.
And, as I wondered drowsily,
It seemed yet queerer and more queer;
For round the Head the rocks are sheer,
With scarce a foothold for a bird;
And it seemed quite beyond belief
That any wrecked upon the reef

Could swim ashore, and scale the crag,
By daylight, let alone by night.

But they who live beside the sea
Know naught 's too wonderful to be :
And as I sat, and heard
The quiet breathing of the child,
Great weariness came over me ;
And, in a kind of daze,
I watched the blaze,
With nodding head :
And must have slept, for, presently,
I found the man was sitting up in bed :
And talking to himself, with wide, unseeing eyes.
At first, I hardly made out what he said :
But soon his voice, so hoarse and wild,
Grew calm : and, straining, I could hear
The broken words that came with many sighs.

' Yes, lad : she 's going : but there 's naught to fear :
For I can swim : and tow you in the belt.
Come, let 's join hands together ; and leap clear. . . .
Aye, son : it 's dark and cold . . . but you have felt
The cold and dark before . . .
And you should scorn . . .
And we must be near shore . . .
For hark, the horn !
Think of your mother, and your home, and leap. . . .
She thinks of us, lad, waking or asleep. . . .
You would not leave her lonely ?
Nay ! . . . then . . . go ! . . .
Well done, lad ! . . . Nay ! I'm here. . . .
Aye, son, it 's cold : but you're too big to fear.
Now then, you're snug : I've got you safe in tow :

The worst is over : and we've only
To make for land . . . we've naught . . . to do . . . but steer . . .
But steer . . . but steer. . . .'

He paused ; and sank down in the bed, quite done :
And lay a moment silent, while his son
Still slumbered in the other bed,
And on his quiet face the firelight shone.
Then, once again, the father raised his head,
And rambled on. . . .
' Say, lad, what cheer ?
I thought you'd dropped asleep : but you're all right.
We'll rest a moment. . . . I'm quite out of breath. . . .
It 's further than . . . Nay, son ! there 's naught to fear . . .
The land must be quite near. . . .
The horn is loud enough !
Aye, lad, it 's cold :
But, you're too old
To cry for cold.
Now . . . keep . . . tight hold :
And we'll be off again.
I've got my breath. . . .'

He sank, once more, as still as death,
With hands that clutched the counterpane :
But still the boy was sleeping quietly.
And then, the father sat up suddenly :
And cried : ' See ! See !
The land ! the land !
It 's near . . . I touch it with my hand.'
And now, ' Oh God ! ' he moaned.
Small wonder, when he saw what lay before—
The black, unbroken crags, so grim and high,
That must have seemed to him to soar

Sheer from the sea's edge to the sky.
But soon he plucked up heart, once more :
'We're safe, lad—safe ashore !
A narrow ledge, but land, firm land.
We'll soon be high and dry.
Nay, son : we can't stay here :
The waves would have us back ;
Or we should perish of the cold.
Come, lad : there 's naught to fear. . . .
You must be brave and bold.
Perhaps, we'll strike a track.
Aye, son : it 's steep, and black,
And slimy to the hold :
But we must climb, and see ! the mist is gone.
The stars are shining clear. . . .
Think, son, your mother 's at the top ;
And you'll be up in no time. See, that star,
The brightest star that ever shone,
Just think it 's she who watches you ;
And knows that you'll be brave and true.
Come, lad : we may not stop . . .
Or, else, the cold. . . .
Give me your hand . . .
Your foot there, now . . . just room to stand.
It cannot be so far. . . .
We'll soon be up . . . this work should make us warm.
Thank God, it 's not a storm,
Or we should scarce . . . your foot, here, firm. . . .
Nay, lad ! you must not squirm.
Come, be a man : you shall not fall :
I'll hold you tight.
There : now, you are my own son, after all !
Your mother, lad,

Her star burns bright . . .
And we're already half-way up the height. . . .
Your mother will be glad,
Aye, she'll be glad to hear
Of her brave boy who had no fear.

'Your foot . . . your hand . . . 'twas but a bird
You startled out of bed :
'Twould think it queer
To wake up, suddenly, and see your head !
And when you stirred . . .
Nay ! steady, lad !
Or you will send your dad . . .
Your hand . . . your foot . . . we'll rest upon this ledge. . . .
Why, son, we're at the top ! I feel the edge,
And grass, soft, dewy grass !
Let go, one moment ; and I'll draw you up. . . .
Now, lad ! . . . Thank God ! that 's past . . .
And you are safe, at last :
You're safe, you're safe . . . and now my precious lass
Will see her son, her little son, again.

'I never thought to reach the top, to-night.
God ! What a height !
Nay ! but you must not look : 'twould turn your head.
And we must not stand shivering here. . . .
And see . . . a flashing light. . . .
It 's sweeping towards us : and now you stand bright.
Ah, your poor, bleeding hands and feet !
My little son, my sweet !
There 's nothing more to fear.
A lighthouse, lad ! And we must make for it.
You're tired ; I'll carry you a bit.
Nay, son : 'twill warm me up . . .

And there will be a fire and bed ;
And even perhaps a cup
Of something hot to drink,
And something good to eat.
And think, son, only think,
Your home . . . and mother . . . once again.'

Once more, the weary head
Sank back upon the bed :
And for a while he hardly stirred ;
But only muttered, now and then,
A broken word,
As though to cheer
His son, who still slept quietly,
Upon the other side of me.

And then, my blood ran cold to hear
A sudden cry of fear :
' My son ! My son !
Ah, God, he 's done !
I thought I'd laid him on the bed. . . .
I've laid him on white mist, instead :
He 's fallen sheer. . . .'

Then, I sprang up ; and cried : ' Your son is here ! '
And taking up the sleeping boy,
I bore him to his father's arms :
And as he nestled to his breast,
Kind life came back to those wild eyes,
And filled them with deep joy :
And free of all alarms,
The son and father lay
Together, in sweet rest,
While through the window stole the strange, clear light of day.

WILFRID GIBSON

Week-end

I

The train! The twelve o'clock for paradise.
Hurry, or it will try to creep away.
Out in the country every one is wise:
We can be only wise on Saturday.
There you are waiting, little friendly house:
Those are your chimney-stacks with you between,
Surrounded by old trees and strolling cows,
Staring through all your windows at the green.
Your homely floor is creaking for our tread;
The smiling teapot with contented spout
Thinks of the boiling water, and the bread
Longs for the butter. All their hands are out
To greet us, and the gentle blankets seem
Purring and crooning: 'Lie in us, and dream.'

II

The key will stammer, and the door reply,
The hall wake, yawn, and smile; the torpid stair
Will grumble at our feet, the table cry:
'Fetch my belongings for me; I am bare.'
A clatter! Something in the attic falls.
A ghost has lifted up his robes and fled.
The loitering shadows move along the walls;
Then silence very slowly lifts his head.
The starling with impatient screech has flown
The chimney, and is watching from the tree.
They thought us gone for ever: mouse alone
Stops in the middle of the floor to see.
Now all you idle things, resume your toil.
Hearth, put your flames on. Sulky kettle, boil.

III

Contented evening ; comfortable joys ;
  The snoozing fire, and all the fields are still :
Tranquil delight, no purpose, and no noise—
  Unless the slow wind flowing round the hill.
'Murry' (the kettle) dozes ; little mouse
  Is rambling prudently about the floor.
There 's lovely conversation in this house :
  Words become princes that were slaves before.
What a sweet atmosphere for you and me
  The people that have been here left behind. . . .
Oh, but I fear it may turn out to be
  Built of a dream, erected in the mind :
    So if we speak too loud, we may awaken
    To find it vanished, and ourselves mistaken.

IV

Lift up the curtain carefully. All the trees
  Stand in the dark like drowsy sentinels.
  The oak is talkative to-night ; he tells
The little bushes crowding at his knees
That formidable, hard, voluminous
  History of growth from acorn into age.
They titter like school-children : they arouse
  Their comrades, who exclaim : 'He is very sage.'
Look how the moon is staring through that cloud,
  Laying and lifting idle streaks of light.
O hark ! was that the monstrous wind, so loud
  And sudden, prowling always through the night ?
    Let down the shaking curtain. They are queer,
    Those foreigners. They and we live so near.

V

Come, come to bed. The shadows move about,
And some one seems to overhear our talk.
The fire is low ; the candles flicker out ;
The ghosts of former tenants want to walk.
Already they are shuffling through the gloom.
I felt an old man touch my shoulder-blade ;
Once he was married here : they love this room,
He and his woman and the child they made.
Dead, dead, they are, yet some familiar sound,
Creeping along the brink of happy life,
Revives their memory from under ground—
The farmer and his troublesome old wife.
Let us be going : as we climb the stairs,
They'll sit down in our warm half-empty chairs.

VI

Morning ! Wake up ! Awaken ! All the boughs
Are rippling on the air across the green.
The youngest birds are singing to the house.
Blood of the world !—and is the country clean ?
Disturb the precinct. Cool it with a shout.
Sing as you trundle down to light the fire.
Turn the encumbering shadows tumbling out,
And fill the chambers with a new desire.
Life is no good, unless the morning brings
White happiness and quick delight of day.
These half-inanimate domestic things
Must all be useful, or must go away.
Coffee, be fragrant. Porridge in my plate,
Increase the vigour to fulfil my fate.

VII

The fresh air moves like water round a boat.
  The white clouds wander. Let us wander too.
The whining wavering plover flap and float.
  That crow is flying after that cuckoo.
Look! Look! . . . They're gone. What are the great
    trees calling?
  Just come a little farther, by that edge
Of green, to where the stormy ploughland, falling
  Wave upon wave, is lapping to the hedge.
Oh, what a lovely bank! Give me your hand.
  Lie down and press your heart against the ground.
Let us both listen till we understand,
  Each through the other, every natural sound. . . .

    I can't hear anything to-day, can you,
    But, far and near: 'Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!'?

VIII

The everlasting grass—how bright, how cool!
  The day has gone too suddenly, too soon.
There 's something white and shiny in that pool—
  Throw in a stone, and you will hit the moon.
Listen, the church-bell ringing! Do not say
  We must go back to-morrow to our work.
We'll tell them we are dead: we died to-day.
  We're lazy. We're too happy. We will shirk.
We're cows. We're kettles. We'll be anything
  Except the manikins of time and fear.
We'll start away to-morrow wandering,
  And nobody will notice in a year. . . .
    Now the great sun is slipping under ground.
    Grip firmly!—How the earth is whirling round.

IX

Be staid ; be careful ; and be not too free.
Temptation to enjoy your liberty
May rise against you, break into a crime,
And smash the habit of employing Time.
It serves no purpose that the careful clock
Mark the appointment, the officious train
Hurry to keep it, if the minutes mock
Loud in your ear : ' Late. Late. Late. Late again.'
Week-end is very well on Saturday :
On Monday it 's a different affair—
A little episode, a trivial stay
In some oblivious spot somehow, somewhere.
On Sunday night we hardly laugh or speak :
Week-end begins to merge itself in Week.

X

Pack up the house, and close the creaking door.
The fields are dull this morning in the rain.
It 's difficult to leave that homely floor.
Wave a light hand : we will return again.
(What was that bird ?) Good-bye, ecstatic tree,
Floating, bursting, and breathing on the air.
The lonely farm is wondering that we
Can leave. How every window seems to stare !
That bag is heavy. Share it for a bit.
You like that gentle swashing of the ground
As we tread ? . . .
It is over. Now we sit
Reading the morning paper in the sound
Of the debilitating heavy train.
London again, again. London again.

HAROLD MONRO

At Bethel

GABRIEL

JACOB, O Abdiel, the chosen man,
To whom most cheeringly we were revealed,
Ascending and descending ministers
That by a ladder came or went from heaven,—
Jacob has prospered, yet not ceased to err,
Impatient with slow time (his fond belief,
That cunning forwards not retards his ends,
Persisting) and has come, but trembling come,
From Haran back to Bethel: I with him.

Climbed unto fortune by base knavish tricks,
Lured on by darkly guessing ignorance,
Sullen, in torment, he was pleased to meet
Strong opposition from a steady wind:
So made his lonely way to higher ground.
Meanwhile flocks, herds, the camels, asses, dogs,
His hirelings, Leah's train and Rachel's train,
Spread, like the shade of some slow sailing cloud,
Athwart the valley, moved along its bed.

Ah, Abdiel, the light blinds none of us,
Its absence is no barrier to our gaze;
But man's dim eyes are foiled with too much light,
And in the darkness ache, they are so weak:
Not half of what he does doth he intend,
Therefore his purpose must be looked into.
So I was sent to be with him and know
His thought, and I was thrown in doubt—Oh yes!
For, though his ardour conquering obstacles
Has been so great that men astounded tell

How seven years appeared but a few days
Ere he might win the woman whom he loved ;
Yet, compassed by deceits and trivial minds,
Himself did stoop to most unworthy shifts,
And his activity was clouded round
With cares enough, at last, to choke the soul.
Still effort, sprung from anger at himself,
This I perceived to be his saving grace :
Not heaven, not earth, not life doth he distrust,
But doth mistrust himself, and for good cause ;
This is his virtue, this his victory.

Leant forward, shoulder edge-wise to the blast,
He made along the rolling sweeps of bleak
Sad, uncongenial upland, while more fierce
There in his mind a brother's probable wrath
Waxed to predestined certainty and stormed.
He suffered ; and his agony intense
Absorbed me so, that inadvertently,
Fordone with ruth, almost I had been brought
Then to put on the like tormented form
And close with him in answer of his prayer,
That strongly yearned to engage some kindred force
And not be lost for ever in the whirl
Which his poor unencountered efforts made.
Although I judged this impulse ill-advised,
Still help, I felt, he needed : help I gave,
And met him there with half the host of heaven.
As, when the rain hath ceased some afternoon,
Between a low and deluge-threatening roof
And the wet shining grass that coats the hills,
A space of clarity, a wall of light
Appears as far as eye can reach, each way ;

Thus, with anointed bodies and white spears,
My cohorts in his front emerged to view:
His raised hand shaped a pent-house for his eyes,
Silent he stood and gazed: I signal gave;
Straight like the boundless shadow when a cloud
Has travelled suddenly across the sun,
Our absence followed where our presence shone.
He said 'This is God's host!' and named the place.

ABDIEL

It must be, Gabriel, it must! This awe,
Beholding energies he might express
Set forth a thousand times with one consent,
Doth show that man begins to know himself.

GABRIEL

For many days that vision had effect,
While still, as each eve closed, it seemed fair tents
Enriched a sister valley, ere he left
The heights to join his folk who camped below:—
Pavilions, as he deemed them, raised by powers
Watchful for his protection, so he might,
Provided for in the great scheme of things,
Without precaution, buoyantly secure,
Wend on as hand in hand with sun and moon,
Upheld in unison with quiring stars,
His right course found for ever, and content.
I bade the wind to cease, unneeded then;
But long it could not be; the past surged back:
How could he trust those smiling distances?
It seemed too easy and too magical!
Him gentle airs perplexed yet more than storms,
Who, fond, would pay a price for pleasant weather:

Acceptance of such generosity
Appeared foolhardy to his teething heart,
Fretful itself, supposing fretfulness
In circumambient peace; the end for him
Loomed darkness, though the end indeed is light.
Wrapped in a head wind's fury he rejoiced
Like one escaped from peril, briefly brave
Ere fears grew gusty: yet an aid welled now,
Within him, for he thought on Rachel's face.
Perchance thou oft-times in the spring hast seen
One tree all white, so tipped it is with buds,
Amongst the tender green of others stand:
O'er him her candour, where most use disguise,
Cast such sweet glamour as that tree exerts;
And he adored the future in her face.
Gardeners in sultry summer count on fruit,
Rememb'ring how their orchards once were white;
And recollection of her beauteous youth
Vouched now his ripening fullness joy and peace.
Alone and undistracted, greatly wrought,
While battling forward on those hills exposed,
He often summoned to his inward view
The beauty that once nerved him to succeed;
And, to that vision harmonized at once,
His hope spread forth and filled the future up,
Leaving no place for fear: so, from the east,
The magic passage of the light is made
Unto the extremest western verge—no sound,
No stir, attainment without effort—dawn!

ABDIEL

O Gabriel, man's words take hold on me;
To hear thee use them touches me to tears.

No stress like this has heavenly intercourse :
Thoughts, passing perfectly from mind to mind
In sacred quiet, mix not pain and pleasure ;
Our songs are silence vivified with awe,
Our weeping is an ecstasy distilled.

GABRIEL

Even so, dear Abdiel, recall that day,
When first as in a mirror we in Adam
Beheld ourselves expressed in kneaded earth.—
Oh, what a rapt anxiety was ours
To watch his conscious body prove itself !
' Let beauty beautifully move ! ' we sang,
Beholding him stand up in Paradise
Whose many trees were stirred with whispering sound :
The grass was dewy and his feet were pleased ;
His bosom next, conceiving ecstasy,
Filled with the summer wind, and he looked round ;
Vision was his ; but still he raised that hand,
So simple yet so manifold in power,
Creating by its very aptitude
The thought creative : herewith slow he felt
That breast which to his shoulders slanted up ;
To whose firm breadth succeeds the easy neck,
Mobile for stately carriage of his head ;
Then seemed to apprehend some heavenly truth,
And smiled, possessing what so soon proved lost.
Delighted to hope comprehended thus
In boon and sensuous symbol all we were,
With novel tremor, anxious a first time then,
We sang, and singing wept ; and still we sing
Weeping, as man's creation still unfolds.
Thus too this man is lyrically stirred

Recalling Rachel young and strange to him.
There, in his mind, I saw her as she came
On foot before her camels, in a stole
Straight, girdleless, of unbleached linen ; large
The opening at the neck in clear ellipse
Lay on her bosom, then swept up, and o'er
Each shoulder vanished ; mellow and warm that lake
Which but just billowed towards each hidden breast ;
Her neck erect seemed strangely slight to rear
The oval head massy with looped-up hair
Whose raven depth was crimpled vividly,
In graduated fineness like the track
Cast net-wise out upon some shining pond,
Whose ripple deepens inward from the curve
Its quickened dark forms on that bland expanse—
So from her smooth brow ruffled lobes of hair.
Guarded by grand shade-treasuring lids and brows,
Large pupils, arch for blackness, swam in milk ;
The soft warm cheeks were nowhere flushed or pallid ;
Her lips breath misted ; and, dimpled about with shade
There, like a rounded pebble, glowed her chin.
Long loose sleeves swaying wholly cloaked her arms ;
While, brown, in green grass-woven sandals cased,
Her feet advancing filled her vesture up
With something like the music of her form,
Audible to the folds it set to move
In grave impressive measures.—Abdiel,
On picturing this, he every time believed,
Despite his stooping to ignoble craft,
That dreamèd promise would be all fulfilled,
Redoubling his best efforts to make way ;
For, always strong, the gale would, now and then,

stole] outer robe. crimpled] curled.

Increase in force so vastly he must halt.
Though difficult steps had yielded him content,
Stopped short or forced to cower near the ground,
The sweat of agony broke from his brow,
And, drying, left strange salt encrusted there.
'O thou that, warring with the furious wind,
Dost symbol forth the passion at thy heart,
That which like cold of serpents frightens thee,
Moist on thy smarting brow, that is thy sweat;
The dust, thy fingers marvel to find there,
Is salt brought from the glistening desert steppes;
That sound of scourges is from rags thou wearest,
With which the blast is violent, rousing them
To waspish wrath: O superstitious man,
Build not from these a portent!' So I sighed,
For he prayed abjectly.—'A truce, O wind,
Let him take breath and know himself again!'
Yet every eve, having regained the tents,
With brief decisive words he gave command,
Intent to thwart his brother of revenge;
Dividing first his company in two,
So, were one lost, the other might escape;
He sends a noble present on before;
A second soon of like well-chosen beasts;
A third anon.—It seemed not right to rest,
And he slept ill; his life, one overwrought
Intense conjecture striving to foresee,
Was barred expansion towards his boys and girls;
E'en Rachel did not venture to draw near.

We came to the ford Jabbok as the dusk
Deepened, what time was left, between these brothers,
Not one day's journey. Could he rest there, then?

No, but by moonlight had his droves across ;
The camels bore his wives and children o'er :
Then on the farther bank the camp was pitched.
Yet he crossed not, but palely watched them safe,
Yearning to feel their ease to ford the stream
A presage and permission for himself.
And almost prayed he for a sudden squall
To rise, or accident to intervene
With danger from the water, from the winds,
From robber hordes : so did they but succeed
Against some expectation, this might work
Assurance clear, that he would be allowed
To plant his banished feet on native soil ;
Since still instinctive terror held him back
And figured deities of local power,
That in a bounded tract are capable
To harm, and lie in wait for men unsound.
By such might Esau be preferred, he thought,
Whose claim was that of birth, and who besides
Was a swart hunter such as demons love.
These enemies were raised from heathen talk,
When awe which he had watched in alien eyes
Imposed on him despite his better sense.
Therefore last night, although they safe were crossed,
He climbed unto yon heights, but found no wind
With which to battle and relieve his soul.
I anxiously was near him and I knew
Almost he would go back : he strained, indeed,
On having crossed his folk and cattle o'er,
As to its moorings in some swollen stream
A shallop doth ; and as it shakes and sighs
He moaned and shuddered under stress of fears,
Whose urgent current tugged against his hold—

His failing hold upon the future's strand,—
Intent to whirl him backward through the world,
An aimless man to dwindle evermore.

Then felt I such compulsion to assume
This human form, that very suddenly,
Between his arms outstretched in anguish cruel
To realize his failure setting in—
Yea, that same instant, when I saw with eyes,
His hands were clenched, his elbows bent, his brows
Contracted, and his hollow mouth and sockets
Drawn with sheer pain to own himself foredoomed!
Feeling this warm resistant wholesome flesh,
Bolt upright, almost touch his out-thrust breast,
He grappled, with a bitter cry of joy.
My thoughts, confused in their strait residence,
Doubted an instant whether by this act
I had not fallen as those others fell,
Who saw the daughters of men how fair they were,
And out of all proportion loved their beauty,
Begetting giants of enormous strength.—
The sympathy I felt came in such flood
That in the conformation of man's brain
It found no chamber, save the wards of passion,
Permitting of activity so swift,
Entire, and wholly centred on one end.
Anon that perfect sanity was mine
Which Enoch reached, what time he walked with God,
Grown up to be with us world without end.

With violence he bound me in his arms;
Then wrestled as it were for very life,
Swinging his weight this side or that of me
To throw or else compel me to my knees:

But I maintained impassively my ground.
And thus it was all night ; his strength grew less,
Yet his will wearied not to conquer now
Or die ; at last, I touched his thigh and caused
The sinew of its hollow to shrink short,
Marking him with full proof, that who opposed,
In rash and strenuous antagonism,
The righted image of his nature's health,
Must lame himself : this blindly yet he did—
Still, still though halt, he persevered in pain,
Though he was weeping, though his arms grew weak
Beyond belief, even as an infant's feeble !
Yet now at last sobs difficult and heavy
Shook me, no strength of his availed to shake,
And lo ! we staggered, tottering both as one,
For his sobs ruled us in their violence.
Then prayed I him to let me go, since now
The day was breaking. He with gasps replied
'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'
'What is thy name ? ' I said. 'Jacob ! ' he moaned.
Then I, 'Thou shalt be called Jacob no more
But Israel : for like a prince hast thou
Had power with God and men, and hast prevailed.'
Silence ensued, but soon he craved yet more :
'Tell me thy name.' 'Wherefore is it that thou
After my name shouldst ask ? ' was my reproof :
'Content thee that I bless thee ; be thou blessèd.'
Herewith I vanished from before his face.

ABDIEL

O Gabriel, such pains must man endure,
And, hard put to, close always on his fate :
Yea, here indeed the generous Esau errs,

Not anxious for the future, nor in throes
Of travail for perfection out of reach.
He met me, and mistook me for a youth;
Praised but my beauty, bid me to a meal,
Kissed me, and went his way, content and kind.

Thus angels sat, conversing with men's words,
Upon huge stones that strew the higher lawns;
While in the vale beneath spread Jacob's tents
And Esau's, side by side in slumber merged.
They were in beauty like to men of strength,
One younger, one mature, in perfect health;
Still we had felt perchance, those limbs had bathed
In sweeter waters than the best on earth.
Most lovely was the night, and they were glad
To take man's beauty to them for a while;
Yet vanished from their thrones before the dawn
Could rouse one sleeper in those numerous tents.

T. Sturge Moore

Lob

At hawthorn-time in Wiltshire travelling
In search of something chance would never bring,
An old man's face, by life and weather cut
And coloured,—rough, brown, sweet as any nut,—
A land face, sea-blue-eyed,—hung in my mind
When I had left him many a mile behind.
All he said was: 'Nobody can't stop 'ee. It 's
A footpath, right enough. You see those bits
Of mounds—that 's where they opened up the barrows
Sixty years since, while I was scaring sparrows.
They thought as there was something to find there,
But couldn't find it, by digging, anywhere.'

To turn back then and seek him, where was the use?
There were three Manningfords,—Abbots, Bohun, and Bruce:
And whether Alton, not Manningford, it was,
My memory could not decide, because
There was both Alton Barnes and Alton Priors.
All had their churches, graveyards, farms, and byres,
Lurking to one side up the paths and lanes,
Seldom well seen except by aeroplanes;
And when bell rang, or pigs squealed, or cocks crowed,
Then only heard. Ages ago the road
Approached. The people stood and looked and turned.
Nor asked it to come nearer, nor yet learned
To move out there and dwell in all men's dust.
And yet withal they shot the weathercock, just
Because 'twas he crowed out of tune, they said:
So now the copper weathercock is dead.
If they had reaped their dandelions and sold
Them fairly, they could have afforded gold.

Many years passed, and I went back again
Among those villages, and looked for men
Who might have known my ancient. He himself
Had long been dead or laid upon the shelf,
I thought. One man I asked about him roared
At my description: 'Tis old Bottlesford
He means, Bill.' But another said: 'Of course,
It was Jack Button up at the White Horse.
He 's dead, sir, these three years.' This lasted till
A girl proposed Walker of Walker's Hill,
'Old Adam Walker. Adam's Point you'll see
Marked on the maps.'

'That was her roguery,'
The next man said. He was a squire's son
Who loved wild bird and beast, and dog and gun
For killing them. He had loved them from his birth,
One with another, as he loved the earth.
'The man may be like Button or Walker, or
Like Bottlesford, that you want, but far more
He sounds like one I saw when I was a child.
I could almost swear to him. The man was wild
And wandered. His home was where he was free.
Everybody has met one such man as he.
Does he keep clear old paths that no one uses
But once a lifetime when he loves or muses?
He is English as this gate, these flowers, this mire.
And when at eight years old Lob-lie-by-the-fire
Came in my books, this was the man I saw.
He has been in England as long as dove and daw,
Calling the wild cherry-tree the merry tree,
The rose campion Bridget-in-her-bravery;
And in a tender mood he, as I guess,

Christened one flower Love-in-idleness,
And while he walked from Exeter to Leeds
One April called all cuckoo-flowers Milkmaids.
From him old herbal Gerard learnt, as a boy,
To name wild clematis the Traveller's-joy,
Our blackbirds sang no English till his ear
Told him they called his Jan Toy "Pretty dear".
(She was Jan Toy the Lucky, who, having lost
A shilling, and found a penny loaf, rejoiced.)
For reasons of his own to him the wren
Is Jenny Pooter. Before all other men
'Twas he first called the Hog's Back the Hog's Back.
That Mother Dunch's Buttocks should not lack
Their name was his care. He too could explain
Totteridge and Totterdown and Juggler's Lane:
He knows, if any one. Why Tumbling Bay,
Inland in Kent, is called so, he might say.

'But little he says compared with what he does.
If ever a sage troubles him he will buzz
Like a beehive to conclude the tedious fray:
And the sage, who knows all languages, runs away.
Yet Lob has thirteen hundred names for a fool,
And though he never could spare time for school
To unteach what the fox so well expressed,
On biting the cock's head off,—Quietness is best,—
He can talk quite as well as any one
After his thinking is forgot and done.
He first of all told some one else's wife,
For a farthing she'd skin a flint and spoil a knife
Worth sixpence skinning it. She heard him speak:
"She had a face as long as a wet week"
Said he, telling the tale in after years.

With blue smock and with gold rings in his ears,
Sometimes he is a pedlar, not too poor
To keep his wit. This is tall Tom that bore
The logs in, and with Shakespeare in the hall
Once talked, when icicles hung by the wall.
As Herne the Hunter he has known hard times.
On sleepless nights he made up weather rhymes
Which others spoilt. And, Hob being then his name,
He kept the hog that thought the butcher came
To bring his breakfast. "You thought wrong," said Hob.
When there were kings in Kent this very Lob,
Whose sheep grew fat and he himself grew merry,
Wedded the king's daughter of Canterbury;
For he alone, unlike squire, lord, and king,
Watched a night by her without slumbering;
He kept both waking. When he was but a lad
He won a rich man's heiress, deaf, dumb, and sad,
By rousing her to laugh at him. He carried
His donkey on his back. So they were married.
And while he was a little cobbler's boy,
He tricked the giant coming to destroy
Shrewsbury by flood. "And how far is it yet?"
The giant asked in passing. "I forget;
But see these shoes I've worn out on the road
And we're not there yet." He emptied out his load
Of shoes for mending. The giant let fall from his spade
The earth for damming Severn, and thus made
The Wrekin hill; and little Ercall hill
Rose where the giant scraped his boots. While still
So young, our Jack was chief of Gotham's sages.
But long before he could have been wise, ages
Earlier than this, while he grew thick and strong
And ate his bacon, or, at times sang a song

And merely smelt it, as Jack the Giant-killer
He made a name. He too ground up the miller,
The Yorkshireman who ground men's bones for flour.

'Do you believe Jack dead before his hour?
Or that his name is Walker, or Bottlesford,
Or Button, a mere clown, or squire, or lord?
The man you saw,—Lob-lie-by-the-fire, Jack Cade,
Jack Smith, Jack Moon, poor Jack of every trade,
Young Jack, or old Jack, or Jack What-d'ye-call,
Jack-in-the-hedge, or Robin-run-by-the-wall,
Robin Hood, Ragged Robin, lazy Bob,
One of the lords of No Man's Land, good Lob,—
Although he was seen dying at Waterloo,
Hastings, Agincourt, and Sedgemoor too,—
Lives yet. He never will admit he is dead
Till millers cease to grind men's bones for bread,
Not till our weathercock crows once again
And I remove my house out of the lane
On to the road.' With this he disappeared
In hazel and thorn tangled with old-man's-beard.
But one glimpse of his back, as there he stood,
Choosing his way, proved him of old Jack's blood,
Young Jack perhaps, and now a Wiltshireman
As he has oft been since his days began.

EDWARD THOMAS

The Woman in the Forest

Thick thunder of the snorting swine,
  Enormous in the gloam,
Rending among all roots that cling,
And the wild horses whinnying,
Were the night's noises when the King,
  Shouldering his harp, went home.

With eyes of owl and feet of fox,
  Full of all thoughts he went;
He marked the tilt of the pagan camp,
The paling of pine, the sentries' tramp,
And the one great stolen altar-lamp
  Over Guthrum in his tent.

By scrub and thorn in Ethandune
  That night the foe had lain;
Whence ran across the heather grey
The old stones of a Roman way;
And in a wood not far away
  The pale road split in twain.

He marked the wood and the cloven ways
  With an old captain's eyes,
And he thought how many a time had he
Sought to see Doom he could not see;
How ruin had come and victory,
  And both were a surprise.

Even so he had watched and wondered
  Under Ashdown from the plains;
With Ethelred praying in his tent,
Till the white hawthorn swung and bent,
As Alfred rushed his spears and rent
  The shield-wall of the Danes.

Even so he had watched and wondered,
Knowing neither less nor more,
Till all his lords lay dying,
And axes on axes plying,
Flung him, and drove him flying
Like a pirate to the shore.

Wise he had been before defeat,
And wise before success;
Wise in both hours, and ignorant,
Knowing neither more nor less.

As he went down to the river-hut
He knew a night-shade scent,
Owls did as evil cherubs rise,
With little wings and lantern eyes,
As though he sank through the under-skies;
But down and down he went.

As he went down to the river-hut
He went as one that fell;
Seeing the high forest domes and spars,
Dim green or torn with golden scars,
As the proud look up at the evil stars,
In the red heavens of hell.

For he must meet by the river-hut
Them he had bidden to arm,
Mark from the towers of Italy,
And Colan of the Sacred Tree,
And Eldred who beside the sea
Held heavily his farm.

The roof leaned gaping to the grass,
  As a monstrous mushroom lies;
Echoing and empty seemed the place;
But opening in a little space
A great grey woman with scarred face
  And strong and humbled eyes.

King Alfred was but a meagre man,
  Bright eyed, but lean and pale:
And swordless, with his harp and rags,
He seemed a beggar, such as lags
  Looking for crusts and ale.

And the woman, with a woman's eyes
  Of pity at once and ire,
Said, when that she had glared a span,
'There is a cake for any man
  If he will watch the fire.'

And Alfred, bowing heavily,
  Sat down the fire to stir,
And even as the woman pitied him
  So did he pity her.

Saying, 'O great heart in the night,
  O best cast forth for worst,
Twilight shall melt and morning stir,
And no kind thing shall come to her,
Till God shall turn the world over
  And all the last are first.

'And well may God with the serving-folk
  Cast in His dreadful lot;
Is not He too a servant,
  And is not He forgot?

'For was not God my gardener
And silent like a slave;
That opened oaks on the uplands
Or thicket in graveyard gave?

'And was not God my armourer,
All patient and unpaid,
That sealed my skull as a helmet,
And ribs for hauberk made?

'Did not a great grey servant
Of all my sires and me,
Build this pavilion of the pines,
And herd the fowls and fill the vines,
And labour and pass and leave no signs
Save mercy and mystery?

'For God is a great servant,
And rose before the day,
From some primordial slumber torn;
But all we living later born
Sleep on, and rise after the morn,
And the Lord has gone away.

'On things half sprung from sleeping,
All sleepy suns have shone,
They stretch stiff arms, the yawning trees,
The beasts blink upon hands and knees,
Man is awake and does and sees—
But Heaven has done and gone.

'For who shall guess the good riddle
Or speak of the Holiest,
Save in faint figures and failing words,
Who loves, yet laughs among the swords,
Labours, and is at rest?

hauberk] coat of mail.

'But some see God like Guthrum,
Crowned, with a great beard curled,
But I see God like a good giant,
That, labouring, lifts the world.

'Wherefore was God in Golgotha,
Slain as a serf is slain;
And hate He had of prince and peer,
And love He had and made good cheer
Of them that, like this woman here,
Go powerfully in pain.

'But in this grey morn of man's life
Cometh sometime to the mind
A little light that leaps and flies,
Like a star blown on the wind.

'A star of nowhere, a nameless star,
A light that spins and swirls,
And cries that even in hedge and hill,
Even on earth, it may go ill
At last with the evil earls.

'A dancing sparkle, a doubtful star,
On the waste wind whirled and driven;
But it seems to sing of a wilder worth,
A time discrowned of doom and birth,
And the kingdom of the poor on earth
Come, as it is in heaven.

'But even though such days endure,
How shall it profit her?
Who shall go groaning to the grave,
With many a meek and mighty slave,
Field-breaker and fisher on the wave,
And woodman and wagoner.

'Bake ye the big world all again
A cake with kinder leaven;
Yet these are sorry evermore—
Unless there be a little door,
A little door in heaven.'

And as he wept for the woman
He let her business be,
And like his royal oath and rash
The good food fell upon the ash
And blackened instantly.

Screaming, the woman caught a cake
Yet burning from the bar,
And struck him suddenly on the face,
Leaving a scarlet scar.

King Alfred stood up wordless,
A man dead with surprise,
And torture stood and the evil things
That are in the childish hearts of kings
An instant in his eyes.

And even as he stood and stared
Drew round him in the dusk
Those friends creeping from far-off farms,
Marcus with all his slaves in arms,
And the strange spears hung with ancient charms
Of Colan of the Usk.

With one whole farm marching afoot
The trampled road resounds,
Farm-hands and farm-beasts blundering by
And jars of mead and stores of rye,
Where Eldred strode above his high
And thunder-throated hounds.

And grey cattle and silver lowed
  Against the unlifted morn,
And straw clung to the spear-shafts tall,
And a boy went before them all
  Blowing a ram's horn.

As mocking such rude revelry,
  The dim clan of the Gael
Came like a bad king's burial-end,
With dismal robes that drop and rend
  And demon pipes that wail—

In long, outlandish garments,
  Torn, though of antique worth,
With Druid beards and Druid spears,
As a resurrected race appears
  Out of an elder earth.

And though the King had called them forth
  And knew them for his own,
So still each eye stood like a gem,
So spectral hung each broidered hem,
Grey carven men he fancied them,
  Hewn in an age of stone.

And the two wild peoples of the north
  Stood fronting in the gloam,
And heard and knew each in its mind
The third great thunder on the wind,
The living walls that hedge mankind,
  The walking walls of Rome.

Mark's were the mixed tribes of the west,
  Of many a hue and strain,

Gurth, with rank hair like yellow grass,
And the Cornish fisher, Gorlias,
And Halmer, come from his first mass,
Lately baptized, a Dane.

But like one man in armour
Those hundreds trod the field,
From red Arabia to the Tyne
The earth had heard that marching line,
Since the cry on the hill Capitoline,
And the fall of the golden shield.

And the earth shook and the King stood still
Under the greenwood bough,
And the smoking cake lay at his feet
And the blow was on his brow.

Then Alfred laughed out suddenly,
Like thunder in the spring,
Till shook aloud the lintel-beams,
And the squirrels stirred in dusty dreams,
And the startled birds went up in streams,
For the laughter of the King.

And the beasts of the earth and the birds looked down,
In a wild solemnity,
On a stranger sight than a sylph or elf,
On one man laughing at himself
Under the greenwood tree—

The giant laughter of Christian men
That roars through a thousand tales,
Where greed is an ape and pride is an ass,
And Jack 's away with his master's lass,
And the miser is banged with all his brass,
The farmer with all his flails;

Tales that tumble and tales that trick,
Yet end not all in scorning—
Of kings and clowns in a merry plight,
And the clock gone wrong and the world gone right,
That the mummers sing upon Christmas night
And Christmas Day in the morning.

'Now here is a good warrant,'
Cried Alfred, 'by my sword;
For he that is struck for an ill servant
Should be a kind lord.

'He that has been a servant
Knows more than priests and kings,
But he that has been an ill servant,
He knows all earthly things.

'Pride flings frail palaces at the sky,
As a man flings up sand,
But the firm feet of humility
Take hold of heavy land.

'Pride juggles with her toppling towers,
They strike the sun and cease,
But the firm feet of humility
They grip the ground like trees.

'He that hath failed in a little thing
Hath a sign upon the brow;
And the Earls of the Great Army
Have no such seal to show.

'The red print on my forehead
Shall flame for a red star,

In the van of the violent marching, then,
When the sky is torn of the trumpets ten,
And the hands of the happy howling men
Fling wide the gates of war.

'This blow that I return not
Ten times will I return
On kings and earls of all degree,
And armies wide as empires be
Shall slide like landslips to the sea
If the red star burn.

'One man shall drive a hundred,
As the dead kings drave;
Before me rocking hosts be riven,
And battering cohorts backwards driven,
For I am the first king known of heaven
That has been struck like a slave.

'Up on the old white road, brothers,
Up on the Roman walls!
For this is the night of the drawing of swords,
And the painted tower of the heathen hordes
Leans to our hammers, fires, and cords,
Leans a little and falls.

'Follow the star that lives and leaps,
Follow the sword that sings,
For we go gathering heathen men,
A terrible harvest, ten by ten,
As the wrath of the last red autumn—then
When Christ reaps down the kings.

'Follow a light that leaps and spins,
Follow the fire unfurled!
For riseth up against realm and rod,
A thing forgotten, a thing downtrod,
The last lost giant, even God,
Is risen against the world.'

Roaring they went o'er the Roman wall,
And roaring up the lane,
Their torches tossed, a ladder of fire,
Higher their hymn was heard and higher,
More sweet for hate and for heart's desire
And up, in the northern scrub and brier
They fell upon the Dane.

G. K. CHESTERTON

Sir John Herschel remembers

True type of all, from his own father's hand
He caught the fire; and, though he carried it far
Into new regions; and, from southern fields
Of yellow lupin, added host on host
To those bright armies which his father knew,
Surely the crowning hour of all his life
Was when, his task accomplished, he returned
A lonely pilgrim to the twilit shrine
Of first beginnings and his father's youth.
There, in the Octagon Chapel, with bared head
Grey, honoured for his father and himself,
He touched the glimmering keyboard, touched the books
Those dear lost hands had touched so long ago.

'Strange that these poor inanimate things outlast
The life that used them.
Yes. I should like to try
This good old friend of his. You will leave me here
An hour or so?'
His hands explored the stops;
And, while the music breathed what else were mute,
His mind through many thoughts and memories ranged.
Picture on picture passed before him there
In living colours, painted on the gloom:
Not what the world acclaimed, the great work crowned,
But all that went before, the years of toil;
The years of infinite patience, hope, despair.
He saw the little house where all began,

lupin] plant with tapering spikes of blue, purple, white, or yellow flowers.

His father's first resolve to explore the sky,
His first defeat, when telescopes were found
Too costly for a music-master's purse;
And then that dogged and all-conquering will
Declaring, 'Be it so. I'll make my own,
A better than even the best that Newton made.'
He saw his first rude telescope—a tube
Of pasteboard, with a lens at either end;
And then,—that arduous growth to size and power
With each new instrument, as his knowledge grew;
And, to reward each growth, a deeper heaven.
He saw the good Aunt Caroline's dismay
When her trim drawing-room, as by wizardry, turned
Into a workshop, where her brother's hands
Cut, ground, and burnished, hour on aching hour,
Month after month, new mirrors of the sky.

Yet, while from dawn to dark her brother moved
Around some new-cut mirror, burnishing it,
Knowing that if he once removed his hands
The surface would be dimmed and must forgo
Its heaven for ever, her quiet hands would raise
Food to his lips; or, with that musical voice
Which once—for she, too, offered her sacrifice—
Had promised her fame, she whiled away the hours
Reading how, long ago, Aladdin raised
The djinns, by burnishing that old battered lamp;
Or, from Cervantes, how one crazy soul
Tilting at windmills, challenged a purblind world.

He saw her seized at last by that same fire,
Burning to help, a sleepless Vestal, dowered
With lightning-quickness, rushing from desk to clock,

Or measuring distances at dead of night
Between the lamp-micrometer and his eyes.

He saw her in mid-winter, hurrying out,
A slim shawled figure through the drifted snow,
To help him ; saw her fall with a stifled cry,
Gashing herself upon that buried hook,
And struggling up, out of the blood-stained drift,
To greet him with a smile.
'For any soldier,
This wound,' the surgeon muttered, 'would have meant
Six weeks in hospital.'
Not six days for her !
'I am glad these nights were cloudy, and we lost
So little,' was all she said.
Sir John pulled out
Another stop. A little ironical march
Of flutes began to goose-step through the gloom.
He saw that first 'success' ! Aye, call it so !
The royal command,—the court desires to see
The planet Saturn and his marvellous rings
On Friday night. The skies, on Friday night,
Were black with clouds. 'Canute me no Canutes,'
Muttered their new magician, and unpacked
His telescope. 'You shall see what you can see.'
He levelled it through a window ; and they saw
'Wonderful ! Marvellous ! Glorious ! Eh, what, what !'
A planet of paper, with a paper ring,
Lit by a lamp, in a hollow of Windsor Park,
Among the ferns, where Herne the Hunter walks,
And Falstaff found that fairies live on cheese.
Thus all were satisfied ; while, above the clouds—

lamp-micrometer] instrument for measuring distances.

The thunder of the pedals reaffirmed—
The Titan planet, every minute, rolled
Three hundred leagues upon his awful way.
Then, through that night, the *vox humana* spoke
With deeper longing than Lucretius knew
When, in his great third book, the sombre chant
Kindled and soared on those exultant wings,
Praising the master's hand from which he, too,
—Father, discoverer, hero—caught the fire.
It spoke of those vast labours, incomplete,
But, through their incompletion, infinite
In beauty, and in hope; the task bequeathed
From dying hand to hand.
Close to his grave
Like a *memento mori* stood the hulk
Of that great weapon rusted and outworn,
Which once broke down the barriers of the sky.
'*Perrupit claustra*'; yes, and bridged their gulfs;
For, far beyond our solar scheme, it showed
The law that bound our planets binding still
Those coupled suns which year by year he watched
Around each other circling
Had our own
Some distant comrade, lost among the stars?
Should we not, one day, just as Kepler drew
His planetary music and its laws
From all those faithful records Tycho made,
Discern at last what vaster music rules
The vaster drift of stars from deep to deep;
Around what awful Poles, those wisps of light

vox humana] a particular stop on the organ supposed to resemble the human voice. *memento mori*] 'be mindful of death'.
'*Perrupit claustra*'] 'he has broken the barriers'.

Those fifteen hundred universes move?
One signal, even now, across the dark,
Declared their worlds confederate with our own;
For, carrying many secrets, which we now
Slowly decipher, one swift messenger comes
Across the abyss. . . .
The light that, flashing through the immeasurable,
From universe to universe proclaims
The single reign of law that binds them all,
We shall break up those rays and, in their lines
And colours, read the history of their stars.
Year after year, the slow sure records grow,
Awaiting their interpreter. They shall see it,
Our sons, in that far day, the swift, the strong,
The triumphing young-eyed runners with the torch.

No deep-set boundary-mark in Space or Time
Shall halt or daunt them. Who that once has seen
How truth leads on to truth, shall ever dare
To set a bound to knowledge?
'Would that he knew'
—So thought the visitant at that shadowy shrine—
'Even as the maker of a song can hear
With the soul's ear, far off, the unstricken chords
To which, by its own inner law, it climbs,
Would that my father knew how younger hands
Completed his own planetary tune;
How from the planet that his own eyes found
The mind of man would plunge into the dark,
And, blindfold, find without the help of eyes
A mightier planet, in the depths beyond.'

Then, while the reeds, with quiet melodious pace,
Followed the dream, as in a picture passed,

Adams, the boy at Cambridge, making his vow
By that still lamp, alone in that deep night,
Beneath the crumbling battlements of St. John's,
To know why Uranus, uttermost planet known,
Moved in a rhythm delicately astray
From all the golden harmonies ordained
By those known measures of its sister-worlds.
Was there an unknown planet, far beyond,
Sailing through unimaginable deeps
And drawing it from its path?
Then challenging chords
Echoed the prophecy that Sir John had made,
Guided by his own faith in Newton's law:
We have not found it, but we feel it trembling
Along the lines of our analysis now
As once Columbus, from the shores of Spain,
Felt the new continent.
Then, in swift fugues, began
A race between two nations for the prize
Of that new world.
Le Verrier in France,
Adams in England, each of them unaware
Of his own rival, at the selfsame hour
Resolved to find it.
Not by the telescope now!
Skies might be swept for aeons ere one spark
Among those myriads were both found and seen
To move, at that vast distance round our sun.
They worked by faith in law alone. They knew
The wanderings of great Uranus, and they knew
The law of Newton.
By the midnight lamp,
Pencil in hand, shut in a four-walled room,

Each by pure thought must work his problem out,—
Given that law, to find the mass and place
Of that which drew their planet from his course.

There were no throngs to applaud them. Each alone
Without the heat of conflict laboured on,
Consuming brain and nerve ; for throngs applaud
Only the flash and tinsel of their day,
Never the quiet runners with the torch.
Night after night they laboured. Line on line
Of intricate figures, moving all in law,
They marshalled. Their long columns formed and marched
From battle to battle, and no sound was heard
Of victory or defeat. They marched through snows
Bleak as the drifts that broke Napoleon's pride
And through a vaster desert. They drilled their hosts
With that divine precision of the mind
To which one second's error in a year
Were anarchy, that precision which is felt
Throbbing through music.
Month on month they toiled,
With worlds for ciphers. One rich autumn night
Brooding over his figures there alone
In Cambridge, Adams found them moving all
To one solution. To the unseeing eye
His long neat pages had no more to tell
Than any merchant's ledger, yet they shone
With epic splendour, and like trumpets pealed
Three hundred million leagues beyond the path
Of our remotest planet, drowned in night
Another and a mightier planet rolls ;
In volume, fifty times more vast than earth,
And of so huge an orbit that its year

Wellnigh outlasts our nations. Though it moves
A thousand leagues an hour, it has not ranged
Thrice through its seasons since Columbus sailed,
Or more than once since Galileo died.

He took his proofs to Greenwich. 'Sweep the skies
Within this limited region now,' he said.
'You'll find your moving planet. I'm not more
Than one degree in error.'
He left his proofs;
But Airy, king of Greenwich, looked askance
At unofficial genius in the young,
And pigeon-holed that music of the spheres.
Nine months he waited till Le Verrier, too,
Pointed to that same region of the sky.
Then Airy, opening his big sleepy lids,
Bade Challis use his telescope,—too late,
To make that honour all his country's own;
For all Le Verrier's proofs were now with Galle
Who, being German, had his star-charts ready
And, in that region, found one needle-point
Had moved. A monster planet!
Honour to France!
Honour to England, too, the cry began,
Who found it also, though she drowsed at Greenwich.
So—as the French said, with some sting in it—
'We gave the name of Neptune to our prize
Because our neighbour England rules the sea.'

'Honour to all,' say we; for, in these wars,
Whoever wins a battle wins for all.
But most of all, honour to him who found
The law that was a lantern to their feet,—
Newton, the first whose thought could soar beyond

The bounds of human vision and declare,
'Thus saith the law of Nature and of God
Concerning things invisible.'
This new world
What was it but one harmony the more
In that great music which himself had heard,—
The chant of those reintegrated spheres
Moving around their sun, while all things moved
Around one deeper Light, revealed by law,
Beyond all vision, past all understanding,
Yet darkly shadowed forth for dreaming men
On earth in music. . . .
Music, all comes back
To music in the end.
Then, in the gloom
Of the Octagon Chapel, the dreamer lifted up
His face, as if to all those great forbears.
The quivering organ rolled upon the dusk
His dream of that new symphony,—the sun
Chanting to all his planets on their way.
While, stop to stop replying, height o'er height,
His planets answered, voices of a dream :

THE SUN

Light, on the far faint planets that attend me!
Light! But for me—the fury and the fire.
My white-hot maelstroms, the red storms that rend me
Can yield them still the harvest they desire.

I kiss with light their sunward-lifted faces.
With dew-drenched flowers I crown their dusky brows.
They praise me, lightly, from their pleasant places.
Their birds belaud me, lightly, from their boughs.

And men, on lute and lyre, have breathed their pleasure.
They have watched Apollo's golden chariot roll;
Hymned his bright wheels, but never mine that measure
A million leagues of flame from Pole to Pole.

Like harbour-lights the stars grow wide before me,
I draw my worlds ten thousand leagues a day.
Their far blue seas like April eyes adore me.
They follow, dreaming, on my soundless way.

How should they know, who wheel around my burning,
What torments bore them, or what power am I,
I, that with all those worlds around me turning,
Sail, every hour, from sky to unplumbed sky?

My planets, these live embers of my passion,
These children of my hurricanes of flame,
Flung thro' the night, for midnight to refashion,
Praise, and forget, the splendour whence they came.

THE EARTH

Was it a dream that, in those bright dominions,
Are other worlds that sing, with lives like mine,
Lives that with beating hearts and broken pinions
Aspire and fall, half-mortal, half-divine?

A grain of dust among those glittering legions—
Am I, I only, touched with joy and tears?
O, silver sisters, from your azure regions,
Breathe, once again, your music of the spheres:—

VENUS

A nearer sun, a rose of light arises,
To clothe my glens with richer clouds of flowers,
To point my clouds with ever new surprises
And wreathe with mist my rosier domes and towers;

Where now, to praise their gods, a throng assembles,
Whose hopes and dreams no sphere but mine has known.
On other worlds the same warm sunlight trembles;
But life, love, worship, these are mine alone.

MARS

And now, as dewdrops in the dawn-light glisten,
Remote and cold—see—Earth and Venus roll.
We signalled them—in music! Did they listen?
Could they not hear those whispers of the soul?

May not their flesh have sealed that fount of glory,
That pure ninth sense which told us of mankind?
Can some deep sleep bereave them of our story
As darkness hides all colours from the blind?

JUPITER

I that am sailing deeper skies and dimmer,
Twelve million leagues beyond the path of Mars,
Salute the sun, that cloudy pearl, whose glimmer
Renews my spring and steers me through the stars.

Think not that I by distances am darkened.
My months are years; yet light is in mine eyes.
Mine eyes are not as yours. Mine ears have hearkened
To sounds from earth. Five moons enchant my skies.

SATURN

And deeper yet, like molten opal shining
My belt of rainbow glory softly streams,
And seven white moons around me intertwining
Hide my vast beauty in a mist of dreams.

Huge is my orbit; and your flickering planet
A mote that flecks your sun, that faint white star;
Yet, in my magic pools, I still can scan it;
For I have ways to look on worlds afar.

Uranus

And deeper yet—twelve million leagues of twilight
  Divide mine empire even from Saturn's ken.
Is there a world whose light is not as my light,
  A midget world of light-imprisoned men?

Shut from this inner vision that hath found me,
  They hunt bright shadows, painted to betray;
And know not that, because their night hath drowned me,
My giants walk with gods in boundless day.

Neptune

Plunge through immensity anew and find me.
  Though scarce I see your sun,—that dying spark—
Across a myriad leagues it still can bind me
  To my sure path, and steer me through the dark.

I sail through vastness, and its rhythms hold me,
  Though threescore earths could in my volume sleep!
Whose are the might and music that enfold me?
  Whose is the law that guides me thro' the Deep?

The Sun

I hear their song. They wheel around my burning!
  I know their orbits; but what path have I?
I that with all those worlds around me turning
  Sail, every hour, ten thousand leagues of sky?

My planets, these live embers of my passion,
  And I, too, filled with music and with flame,
Flung thro' the night, for midnight to refashion,
  Praise and forget the splendour whence we came.

Alfred Noyes

A Dream of Artemis

THERE was soft beauty on the linnet's tongue
To see the rainbow's coloured bands arch wide.
The thunder darted his red fangs among
South mountains, but the East was like a bride
Drest for the altar at her mother's door
Weeping between two loves. The fields were pied
With May's munificence of flowers, that wore
The fashion of the days when Eve was young,
God's kirtles, ere the first sweet summer died.
The blackbird in a thorn of waving white
Sang bouquets of small tunes that bid me turn
From twilight wanderings thro' some old delight
I heard in my far memory making mourn.
Such music fills me with a joy half pain,
And beats a track across my life I spurn
In sober moments. Ah, this wandering brain
Could play its hurdy-gurdy all the night
To vagrant joys of days beyond the bourn.

I heard the river warble sweetly nigh
To meet the warm salt tide below the weir,
And saw a coloured line of cows pass by,—
And then a voice said quickly, 'Iris here!'
'What message now hath Hera?' then I woke,
An exile in Arcadia, and a spear
Flashed by me, and ten nymphs fleet-footed broke
Out of the coppice with a silver cry,
Into the bow of lights to disappear.
For one blue minute then there was no sound
Save water-noise, slow round a rushy bend,
And bird-delight, and ripples on the ground

kirtles] outer dress.

Of windy flowers that swelling would ascend
The coloured hill and break all beautiful
And, falling backwards, to the woods would send
The full tide of their love. What soft moons pull
Their moving fragrance? did I ask, and found
Sad Io in far Egypt met a friend.—
It was my body thought so, far away
In the grey future, not the wild bird tied
That is the wandering soul. Behind the day
We may behold thee, soft one, hunted wide
By the loud gadfly; but the truant soul
Knows thee before thou lay by night's dark side,
Wed to the dimness; long before its dole
Was meted it, to be thus pound in clay
That daubs its whiteness and offends its pride.

There were loud questions in the rainbow's end,
And hurried answers, and a sound of spears.
And through the yellow blaze I saw one bend
Down on a trembling white knee, and her tears
Fell down in globes of light, and her small mouth
Was filled up with a name unspoken. Years
Of waiting love, and all their long, long drought
Of kisses parched her lips, and did she spend
Her eyes blue candles searching thro' her fears.
'She hath loved Ganymede, the stolen boy,'
Said one, and then another, 'Let us sing
To Zeus that he may give her living joy
Above Olympus, where the cool hill-spring
Of Lethe bubbles up to bathe the heart
Sorrow's lean fingers bruised. There eagles wing
To eyries in the stars, and when they part
Their broad dark wings a wind is born to buoy
The bee home heavy in the far evening.'

HYMN TO ZEUS

'God, whose kindly hand doth sow
The rainbow showers on hill and lawn,
To make the young sweet grasses grow
And fill the udder of the fawn.
Whose light is life of leaf and flower,
And all the colours of the birds.
Whose song goes on from hour to hour
Upon the river's liquid words.

Reach out a golden beam of thine
And touch her pain. Your finger-tips
Do make the violets' blue eclipse
Like milk upon a daisy shine.

God, who lights the little stars,
And over night the white dew spills.
Whose hand doth move the season's cars
And clouds that mock our pointed hills.
Whose bounty fills the cow-trod wold,
And fills with bread the warm brown sod.
Who brings us sleep, where we grow old
'Til sleep and age together nod.

Reach out a beam and touch the pain
A heart has oozed thro' all the years.
Your pity dries the morning's tears
And fills the world with joy again!'

The rainbow's lights were shut, and all the maids
Stood round the sad nymph in a snow-white ring.
She rising spoke, 'A blue and soft light bathes
Me to the fingers. Lo, I upward swing!'

And round her fell a mantle of blue light.
'Watch for me on the forehead of evening.'
And lifting beautiful went out of sight.
And all the flowers flowed backward from the glades,
An ebb of colours redolent of Spring.

Beauty and Love are sisters of the heart,
Love has no voice, and Beauty whispered song.
Now in my own, drawn silently apart
Love looked, and Beauty sang. I felt a strong
Pulse on my wrist, a feeling like a pain
In my quick heart, for Love with gazes long
Was worshipping at Artemis, now lain
Among the heaving flowers. . . . I longed to dart
And fold her to my breast, nor saw the wrong.
She lay there, a tall beauty by her spear,
Her kirtle falling to her soft round knee.
Her hair was like the day when evening's near,
And her moist mouth might tempt the golden bee.
Smile's creases ran from dimples pink and deep,
And when she raised her arms I loved to see
The white mounds of her muscles. Gentle sleep
Threatened her far blue looks. The noisy weir
Fell into a low murmuring lullaby.
And then the flowers came back behind the heel
Of hunted Io: she, poor maid, had fear
Wide in her eyes looking half back to steal
A glimpse of the loud gadfly fiercely near.
In her right hand she held a slanting light,
And in her left her train. Artemis here
Raised herself on her palms, and took a white
Horn from her side and blew a silver peal
'Til three hounds from the coppice did appear.

The white nine left the spaces of flowers, and now
Went calling thro' the wood the hunter's call.
Young echoes sleeping in the hollow bough
Took up the shouts and handed them to all
Their sisters of the crags, 'til all the day
Was filled with voices loud and musical.
I followed them across a tangled way
'Til the red deer broke out and took the brow
Of a wide hill in bounces like a ball.
Beside swift Artemis I joined the chase;
We roused up kine and scattered fleecy flocks;
Crossed at a mill a swift and bubbly race;
Scaled in a wood of pine the knotty rocks;
Past a grey vision of a valley town;
Past swains at labour in their coloured frocks;
Once saw a boar upon a windy down;
Once heard a cradle in a lonely place,
And saw the red flash of a frightened fox.

We passed a garden where three maids in blue
Were talking of a queen a long time dead.
We caught a green glimpse of the sea; then thro'
A town all hills; now round a wood we sped
And killed our quarry in his native lair.
Then Artemis spun round to me and said,
'Whence come you?' and I took her long damp hair
And made a ball of it, and said, 'Where you
Are midnight's dreams of love.' She dropped her head,
No word she spoke, but, panting in her side,
I heard her heart. The trees were all at peace,
And lifting slowly on the grey evetide
A large and lovely star. Then to release

race] strong current of water.

Her hair, my hand dropped to her girded waist
And lay there shyly. 'O my love, the lease
Of your existence is for ever: taste
No less with me the love of earth,' I cried.
'Though for so short a while on lands and seas
Our mortal hearts know beauty, and overblow,
And we are dust upon some passing wind,
Dust and a memory. But for you the snow
That so long cloaks the mountains to the knees
Is no more than a morning. It doth go
And summer comes, and leaf upon the trees:
Still you are fair and young, and nothing find
In all man's story that seems long ago.
I have not loved on Earth the strife for gold,
Nor the great name that makes immortal man,
But all that struggle upward to behold
What still is left of Beauty undisgraced,
The snowdrop at the heel of winter cold
And shivering, and the wayward cuckoo chased
By lingering March, and, in the thunder's van,
The poor lambs merry on the meagre wold,
By-ways and cast-off things that lie therein,
Old boots that trod the highways of the world,
The schoolboy's broken hoop, the battered bin
That heard the ragman's story, blackened places
Where gipsies camped and circuses made din,
Fast water and the melancholy traces
Of sea tides, and poor people madly whirled
Up, down, and through the black retreats of sin.
These things a god might love, and stooping bless
With benedictions of eternal song.—
But I have not loved Artemis the less
For loving these, but deem it noble love

To sing of live or dead things in distress
And wake memorial memories above.

'Such is the soul that comes to plead with you,
Oh, Artemis, to tend you in your needs.
At mornings I will bring you bells of dew
From honey places, and wild fish from streams
Flowing in secret places. I will brew
Sweet wine of alder for your evening dreams,
And pipe you music in the dusky reeds
When the four distances give up their blue.

'And when the white procession of the stars
Crosses the night, and on their tattered wings,
Above the forest, cry the loud night-jars,
We'll hunt the stag upon the mountain-side,
Slipping like light between the shadow bars
'Til burst of dawn makes every distance wide.
Oh, Artemis—what grief the silence brings!
I hear the rolling chariot of Mars!'

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

The Machine

Since Thursday he'd been working overtime,
With only three short hours for food and sleep,
When no sleep came, because of the dull beat
Of his fagged brain; and he could scarcely eat.
And now, on Saturday, when he was free,
And all his fellows hurried home to tea,
He was so dazed that he could hardly keep
His hands from going through the pantomime
Of keeping-even sheets in his machine—
The sleek machine that, day and night,
Fed with paper, virgin white,
Through those glaring, flaring hours
In the incandescent light,
Printed children's picture-books—
Red and yellow, blue and green,
With sunny fields and running brooks,
Ships at sea, and golden sands,
Queer white towns in Eastern lands,
Tossing palms on coral strands—
Until at times the clank and whirr and click,
And shimmer of white paper turned him sick;
And though at first the colours made him glad,
They soon were dancing in his brain like mad;
And kept on flaring through his burning head:
Now, in a flash, the workshop, flaming red;
Now blazing green; now staring blue;
And then the yellow glow too well he knew:
Until the sleek machine, with roar and glare,
Began to take him in a dazzling snare;
When, fascinated, with a senseless stare,
It drew him slowly towards it, till his hair

Was caught betwixt the rollers; but his hand,
Almost before his brain could understand,
Had clutched the lever; and the wheels were stopped
Just in the nick of time; though now he dropped,
Half-senseless on the littered workshop floor:
And he'd lain dazed a minute there or more,
When his machine-girl helped him to a seat.
But soon again he was upon his feet,
And tending that unsatisfied machine;
And printing pictures, red and blue and green,
Until again the green and blue and red
Went jigging in a riot through his head;
And, wildest of the raging rout,
The blinding, screeching, racking yellow—
A crazy devil of a fellow—
O'er all the others seemed to shout.
For hands must not be idle when the year
Is getting through, and Christmas drawing near,
With piles on piles of picture-books to print
For people who spend money without stint;
And, while they're paying down their liberal gold,
Guess little what is bought, and what is sold.

But he, at last, was free till Monday, free
To sleep, to eat, to dream, to sulk, to walk,
To laugh, to sing, to whistle, or to talk . . .
If only, through his brain, unceasingly,
The wheels would not keep whirring, while the smell—
The oily smell of thick and sticky glaze
Clung to his nostrils, till 'twas hard to tell
If he were really out in the fresh air;
And still before his eyes, the blind, white glare,
And then the colours dancing in his head,

A maddening maze of yellow, blue, and red.
So, on he wandered in a kind of daze,
Too racked with sleeplessness to think of bed
Save as a hell, where you must toss and toss,
With colours shooting in insane criss-cross
Before wide, prickling, gritty, sleepless eyes.

But, as he walked along the darkening street
Too tired to rest, and far too spent to eat,
The swish and patter of the passing feet,
The living, human murmur, and keen cries,
The deep, cool shadows of the coming night,
About quick-kindling jets of clustered light;
And the fresh breathing of the rain-washed air,
Brought something of sweet healing to his mind.
And, though he trailed along as if half-blind,
Yet often on the pavement he would stop
To gaze at goods displayed within a shop;
And wonder, in a dull and lifeless way,
What they had cost, and who'd the price to pay.
But those two kinds of shop which, as a boy,
Had been to him a never-failing joy,
The bookshop and the fruitshop, he passed by,
As if their colours seared his wincing eye;
For still he feared the yellow, blue, and red
Would start that devils' dancing in his head.
And soon, through throngs of people almost gay
To be let loose from work, he pushed his way;
And ripples of their careless laughter stole
Like waves of cooling waters through his soul,
While sometimes he would lift his aching eyes,
And see a child's face, flushed with proud surprise,
As, gripping both its parents' hands quite tight,

It found itself in fairylands of light,
Walking with grown-up people through the night:
Then, turning, with a shudder he would see
Poor painted faces, leering frightfully,
And so drop back from heaven again to hell.

And then, somehow, though how he scarce could tell,
He found that he was walking through the throng,
Quite happy, with a young girl at his side—
A young girl apple-cheeked and eager-eyed;
And her frank, friendly chatter seemed a song
To him, who ne'er till now had heard life sing.
And youth within him kindled quick and strong,
As he drank in that careless chattering.
She told him how just lately she had come
From some far Northern Isle to earn her bread;
And in a stuffy office all day long,
In shiny ledgers, with a splitting head,
She added dazzling figures till they danced,
And tied themselves in wriggling knots, and pranced,
And scrambled helter-skelter o'er the page:
And though it seemed already quite an age
Since she had left her home, from end to end
Of this big town she had not any friend:
At times she almost dreaded she'ld go dumb,
With not a soul to speak to; for, at home
In her own Island, she knew every one . . .
No strangers there! save when the tinkers came,
With pots and pans a-glinting in the sun—
You saw the tin far off, like glancing flame,
As all about the Island they would roam . . .
Then, of themselves at home, there were six brothers,
Five sisters, with herself, besides the others—

Two homeless babes, whom, having lost their mothers,
Her mother 'd taken in among her own . . .
And she in all her life had hardly known
Her mother with no baby at her breast . . .
She'ld always sing to hush them all to sleep ;
And sang, too, for the dancing, sang to keep
The feet in time and tune ; and still sang best,
Clean best of all the singers of the Isle.
And as she talked of home, he saw her smile,
With happy, far-off gaze ; and then as though
In wonder how she'd come to chatter so
To this pale, grave-eyed boy, she paused, half shy ;
And then she laughed, with laughter clear and true ;
And looked into his eyes ; and he laughed too,
And they were happy, hardly knowing why.

And now he told her of his life, and how
He too had been nigh friendless, until now.
And soon he talked to her about his work ;
But when he spoke of it, as with a jerk,
The light dropped from his eyes. He seemed to slip
Once more in the machine's relentless grip ;
And hear again the clank and whirr and click ;
And see the dancing colours and the glare ;
Until his dizzy brain again turned sick :
And seeing him look round with vacant air,
Fierce pity cut her to the very quick ;
And as her eyes with keen distress were filled,
She touched his hand ; and soon her kind touch stilled
The agony : and so, to bring him ease,
She told more of that Isle in Northern seas,
Where she was born, and of the folks at home :
And how, all night, you heard the wash of foam . . .

Sometimes, on stormy nights, against the pane
The sousing spray would rattle just like rain;
And oft the high-tides scoured the threshold clean . . .

And as she talked, he saw the sea-light glint
In her dark eyes: and then the sleek machine
Lost hold on him at last; and ceased to print:
And in his eyes there sprang a kindred light,
As, hand in hand, they wandered through the night.

WILFRID GIBSON

The Last Suttee

Not many years ago a King died in one of the Rajpoot States. His wives, disregarding the orders of the English against Suttee, would have broken out of the palace and burned themselves with the corpse had not the gates been barred. But one of them, disguised as the King's favourite dancing-girl, passed through the line of guards and reached the pyre. There, her courage failing, she prayed her cousin, a baron of the King's court, to kill her. This he did, not knowing who she was.

Udai Chand lay sick to death
  In his hold by Gungra hill.
All night we heard the death-gongs ring,
For the soul of the dying Rajpoot King,
All night beat up from the women's wing
  A cry that we could not still.

All night the barons came and went,
  The Lords of the Outer Guard.
All night the cressets glimmered pale
On Ulwar sabre and Tonk jezail,
Mewar headstall and Marwar mail,
  That clinked in the palace yard.

In the Golden Room on the palace roof
  All night he fought for air:
And there were sobbings behind the screen,
Rustle and whisper of women unseen,
And the hungry eyes of the Boondi Queen
  On the death she might not share.

He passed at dawn—the death-fire leaped
  From ridge to river-head,
From the Malwa plains to the Abu scars:
And wail upon wail went up to the stars
Behind the grim zenana-bars,
  When they knew that the King was dead.

The dumb priest knelt to tie his mouth
And robe him for the pyre.
The Boondi Queen beneath us cried:
'See, now, that we die as our mothers died
In the bridal-bed by our master's side!
Out, women!—to the fire!'

We drove the great gates home apace—
White hands were on the sill:
But ere the rush of the unseen feet
Had reached the turn to the open street,
The bars shot down, the guard-drum beat—
We held the dovecot still.

A face looked down in the gathering day,
And laughing spoke from the wall:
'Ohé, they mourn here: let me by—
Azizun, the Lucknow nautch-girl, I!
When the house is rotten, the rats must fly,
And I seek another thrall.

'For I ruled the King as ne'er did Queen,—
To-night the Queens rule me!
Guard them safely, but let me go,
Or ever they pay the debt they owe
In scourge and torture!' She leaped below,
And the grim guard watched her flee.

They knew that the King had spent his soul
On a North-bred dancing-girl:
That he prayed to a flat-nosed Lucknow god,
And kissed the ground where her feet had trod,
And doomed to death at her drunken nod,
And swore by her lightest curl.

nautch-girl] professional dancing-girl.

We bore the King to his fathers' place,
  Where the tombs of the Sun-born stand:
Where the grey apes swing, and the peacocks preen
On fretted pillar and jewelled screen,
And the wild boar couch in the House of the Queen
  On the drift of the desert sand.

The herald read his titles forth,
  We set the logs aglow:
'Friend of the English, free from fear,
Baron of Luni to Jeysulmeer,
Lord of the Desert of Bikaneer,
  King of the Jungle,—go!'

All night the red flame stabbed the sky
  With wavering wind-tossed spears:
And out of a shattered temple crept
A woman who veiled her head and wept,
And called on the King—but the great King slept,
  And turned not for her tears.

One watched, a bow-shot from the blaze,
  The silent streets between,
Who had stood by the King in sport and fray,
To blade in ambush or boar at bay,
And he was a baron old and grey,
  And kin to the Boondi Queen.

Small thought had he to mark the strife—
  Cold fear with hot desire—
When thrice she leaped from the leaping flame,
And thrice she beat her breast for shame,
And thrice like a wounded dove she came
  And moaned about the fire.

He said: 'O shameless, put aside
The veil upon thy brow!
Who held the King and all his land
To the wanton will of a harlot's hand!
Will the white ash rise from the blistered brand?
Stoop down, and call him now!'

Then she: 'By the faith of my tarnished soul,
All things I did not well,
I had hoped to clear ere the fire died,
And lay me down by my master's side
To rule in Heaven his only bride,
While the others howl in Hell.

'But I have felt the fire's breath,
And hard it is to die!
Yet if I may pray a Rajpoot lord
To sully the steel of a Thakur's sword
With base-born blood of a trade abhorred? . . .'
And the Thakur answered, 'Ay.'

He drew and struck: the straight blade drank
The life beneath the breast.
'I had looked for the Queen to face the flame,
But the harlot dies for the Rajpoot dame—
Sister of mine, pass, free from shame.
Pass with thy King to rest!'

The black log crashed above the white:
The little flames and lean,
Red as slaughter and blue as steel,
That whistled and fluttered from head to heel,
Leaped up anew, for they found their meal
On the heart of—the Boondi Queen!

RUDYARD KIPLING

The Ballad of 'Beau Brocade'

'Hark! I hear the sound of coaches!'
BEGGAR'S OPERA.

SEVENTEEN hundred and thirty-nine:—
That was the date of this tale of mine.

First great GEORGE was buried and gone;
GEORGE the Second was plodding on.

LONDON then, as the 'Guides' aver,
Shared its glories with *Westminster*.

And people of rank, to correct their 'tone',
Went out of town to *Marybone*.

Those were the days of the War with *Spain*,
PORTO-BELLO would soon be ta'en;

WHITEFIELD preached to the colliers grim,
Bishops in lawn sleeves preached at him;

WALPOLE talked of 'a man and his price';
Nobody's virtue was over-nice:—

Those, in fine, were the brave days when
Coaches were stopped by . . . *Highwaymen!*

And of all the knights of the gentle trade
Nobody bolder than 'BEAU BROCADE'.

This they knew on the whole way down;
Best,—maybe,—at the '*Oak and Crown*'.

(For timorous cits on their pilgrimage
Would 'club' for a 'Guard' to ride the stage:

And the Guard that rode on more than one
Was the Host of this hostel's sister's son.)

Open we here on a March day fine,
Under the oak with the hanging sign.

There was Barber DICK with his basin by;
Cobbler JOE with the patch on his eye;

Portly product of Beef and Beer,
JOHN the host, he was standing near.

Straining and creaking, with wheels awry,
Lumbering came the '*Plymouth Fly*';—

Lumbering up from *Bagshot Heath*,
Guard in the basket armed to the teeth;

Passengers heavily armed inside;
Not the less surely the coach had been tried!

Tried!—but a couple of miles away,
By a well-dressed man!—in the open day!

Tried successfully, never a doubt,—
Pockets of passengers all turned out!

Cloak-bags rifled, and cushions ripped,—
Even an Ensign's wallet stripped!

Even a Methodist hosier's wife
Offered the choice of her Money or Life!

Highwayman's manners no less polite,
Hoped that their coppers (returned) were right;—

Sorry to find the company poor,
Hoped next time they'd travel with more;—

Plucked them all at his ease, in short:—
Such was the '*Plymouth Fly's*' report.

Sympathy! horror! and wonderment!
'Catch the Villain!' (But Nobody went.)

Hosier's wife led into the Bar;
(That 's where the best strong waters are!)

Followed the tale of the hundred-and-one
Things that Somebody ought to have done.

Ensign (of Bragg's) made a terrible clangour:
But for the Ladies had drawn his hanger!

Robber, of course, was 'Beau Brocade';
Out-spoke Dolly the Chambermaid.

Devonshire Dolly, plump and red,
Spoke from the gallery overhead;—

Spoke it out boldly, staring hard:—
'Why didn't you shoot then, George the Guard?'

Spoke it out bolder, seeing him mute:—
'George the Guard, why didn't you shoot?'

Portly John grew pale and red,
(John was afraid of her, people said;)

Gasped that 'Dolly was surely cracked',
(John was afraid of her—that 's a fact!)

George the Guard grew red and pale,
Slowly finished his quart of ale:—

'Shoot? Why—Rabbit him!—didn't he shoot?'
Muttered—'The Baggage was far too 'cute!'

'Shoot? Why he'd flashed the pan in his eye!'
Muttered—'She'd pay for it by and by!'
Further than this made no reply.

Nor could a further reply be made,
For GEORGE *was in league with* 'BEAU BROCADE'!

And JOHN the Host, in his wakefullest state,
Was not—on the whole—immaculate.

But nobody's virtue was over-nice
When WALPOLE talked of 'a man and his price';

And wherever Purity found abode,
'Twas certainly *not* on a posting road.

II

'Forty' followed to 'Thirty-nine'.
Glorious days of the *Hanover* line!

Princes were born, and drums were banged;
Now and then batches of Highwaymen hanged.

'Glorious news!'—from the *Spanish Main*;
PORTO-BELLO at last was ta'en.

'Glorious news!'—for the liquor trade;
Nobody dreamed of 'BEAU BROCADE'.

People were thinking of *Spanish Crowns*;
Money was coming from sea-port towns!

Nobody dreamed of 'BEAU BROCADE',
(Only DOLLY the Chambermaid!)

Blessings on VERNON! Fill up the cans;
Money was coming in '*Flys*' and '*Vans*'.

Possibly JOHN the Host had heard;
Also, certainly, GEORGE the Guard.

And DOLLY had possibly tidings, too,
That made her rise from her bed anew,

Plump as ever, but stern of eye,
With a fixed intention to warn the '*Fly*'.

Lingering only at JOHN his door,
Just to make sure of a jerky snore;

Saddling the grey mare, *Dumpling Star*;
Fetching the pistol out of the bar;

(The old horse-pistol that, they say,
Came from the battle of *Malplaquet*;)

Loading with powder that maids would use,
Even in 'Forty', to clear the flues;

And a couple of silver buttons, the Squire
Gave her, away in *Devonshire*.

These she wadded—for want of better—
With the B—SH—P of L—ND—N's 'Pastoral Letter';

Looked to the flint, and hung the whole,
Ready to use, at her pocket-hole.

Thus equipped and accoutred, DOLLY
Clattered away to '*Exciseman's Folly*';—

Such was the name of a ruined abode,
Just on the edge of the *London* road.

Thence she thought she might safely try,
As soon as she saw it, to warn the '*Fly*'.

But, as chance fell out, her rein she drew,
As the BEAU came cantering into the view.

By the light of the moon she could see him drest
In his famous gold-sprigged tambour vest;

tambour] embroidery worked on a special kind of frame.

And under his silver-grey surtout,
The laced, historical coat of blue,

That he wore when he went to *London-Spaw*,
And robbed Sir MUNGO MUCKLETHRAW.

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Trembling a little, but not afraid,)
'Stand and Deliver, O "BEAU BROCADE"!'

But the BEAU rode nearer, and would not speak,
For he saw by the moonlight a rosy cheek;

And a spavined mare with a rusty hide;
And a girl with her hand at her pocket-side.

So never a word he spoke as yet,
For he thought 'twas a freak of MEG or BET;—
A freak of the '*Rose*' or the '*Rummer*' set.

Out-spoke DOLLY the Chambermaid,
(Tremulous now, and sore afraid,)
'Stand and Deliver, O "BEAU BROCADE"!'—

Firing then, out of sheer alarm,
Hit the BEAU in the bridle-arm.

Button the first went none knows where,
But it carried away his *solitaire*;

Button the second a circuit made,
Glanced in under the shoulder-blade;—
Down from the saddle fell 'BEAU BROCADE'!

surtout] greatcoat spavined] lame, halting solitaire] loose necktie of black silk; also, sometimes, a ring with a single stone.

Down from the saddle and never stirred !—
DOLLY grew white as a *Windsor* curd.

Slipped not less from the mare, and bound
Strips of her kirtle about his wound.

Then, lest his Worship should rise and flee,
Fettered his ankles—tenderly.

Jumped on his chestnut, BET the fleet
(Called after BET of *Portugal Street*) ;

Came like the wind to the old Inn-door ;—
Roused fat JOHN from a threefold snore ;—

Vowed she'd 'peach if he misbehaved . . .
Briefly, the '*Plymouth Fly*' was saved !

Staines and *Windsor* were all on fire :—
DOLLY was wed to a *Yorkshire* squire ;
Went to Town at the K—G's desire !

But whether His M—J—STY saw her or not,
HOGARTH jotted her down on the spot ;

And something of DOLLY one still may trace
In the fresh contours of his '*Milkmaid's*' face.

GEORGE the Guard fled over the sea :
JOHN had a fit—of perplexity ;

Turned King's evidence, sad to state ;—
But JOHN was never immaculate.

As for the BEAU, he was duly tried,
When his wound was healed, at *Whitsuntide* ;

Served—for a day—as the last of 'sights',
To the world of *St. James's-Street* and '*White's*',

Went on his way to TYBURN TREE,
With a pomp befitting his high degree.

Every privilege rank confers :—
Bouquet of pinks at *St. Sepulchre's* ;

Flagon of ale at *Holborn Bar* ;
Friends (in mourning) to follow his Car—
('t' is omitted where HEROES are !)

Every one knows the speech he made ;
Swore that he 'rather admired the Jade !'—

Waved to the crowd with his gold-laced hat :
Talked to the Chaplain after that ;

Turned to the Topsman undismayed . . .
This was the finish of 'BEAU BROCADE' !

And this is the Ballad that seemed to hide
In the leaves of a dusty 'LONDONER'S GUIDE' ;

'*Humbly Inscrib'd* (*with curls and tails*)
By the Author, to FREDERICK, *Prince of* WALES :—

'*Published by* FRANCIS *and* OLIVER PINE ;
Ludgate-Hill, at the Blackmoor Sign.
Seventeen-Hundred-and-Forty-Nine.'

AUSTIN DOBSON

The Old Vicarage, Grantchester

Café des Westens, Berlin

Just now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room ;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink ;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow. . . .
Oh ! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above ; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death.
—Oh, damn ! I know it ! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .
Du lieber Gott !

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.
Temperamentvoll German Jews
Drink beer around ;—and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told ;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose ;

du lieber Gott] Dear God. *Temperamentvoll*] full of temperament.

And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,
And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
A slippered Hesper ; and there are
Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
Where *das Betreten*'s not *verboten*. . . .

εἴθε γενοίμην . . . would I were
In Grantchester, in Grantchester !—
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With Nature there, or Earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,
To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
Or hear the Goat-foot piping low : . . .
But these are things I do not know.
I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester. . . .
Still in the dawnlit waters cool
His ghostly Lordship swims his pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx ;
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill.
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by. . . .

das Betreten . . . verboten] trespass . . . forbidden. εἴθε γενοίμην] Would that I were.

And in that garden, black and white
Creep whispers through the grass all night,
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean. . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England 's the one land, I know,
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for Men who Understand;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile;
And Royston men in the far South
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington,
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,
And there 's none in Harston under thirty,
And folks in Shelford and those parts
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,

And Barton men make Cockney rhymes,
And Coton 's full of nameless crimes,
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley, on Christmas Eve.
Strong men have run for miles and miles,
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles ;
Strong men have blanched, and shot their wives
Rather than send them to St. Ives ;
Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened at Babraham.
But Grantchester ! ah, Grantchester !
There 's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white,
They bathe by day, they bathe by night ;
The women there do all they ought ;
The men observe the Rules of Thought.
They love the Good ; they worship Truth ;
They laugh uproariously in youth ;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God ! to see the branches stir,
Across the moon at Grantchester !
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River-smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.

Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand,
Still guardians of that holy land?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn?
Oh, is the water sweet and cool
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? and Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh! yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?

RUPERT BROOKE

Anadyomene] rising from the waters.

The Inscription

(*A Tale*)

Sir John was entombed, and the crypt was closed, and she,
Like a soul that could meet no more the sight of the sun,
Inclined her in weepings and prayings continually,
As his widowed one.

And to pleasure her in her sorrow, and fix his name
As a memory Time's fierce frost should never kill,
She caused to be richly chased a brass to his fame,
Which should link them still;

For she bonded her name with his own on the brazen page,
As if dead and interred there with him, and cold, and numb,
(Omitting the day of her dying and year of her age
Till her end should come;)

And implored good people to pray '**Of their Charytie For these twaine Soules**,'—yea, she who did last remain
Forgoing Heaven's bliss if ever with spouse should she
Again have lain.

Even there, as it first was set, you may see it now,
Writ in quaint Church-text, with the date of her death left bare,
In the aged Estminster aisle, where the folk yet bow
Themselves in prayer.

Thereafter some years slid, till there came a day
When it slowly began to be marked of the standers-by
That she would regard the brass, and would bend away
With a drooping sigh.

Now the lady was fair as any the eye might scan
Through a summer day of roving—a type at whose lip
Despite her maturing seasons, no meet man
Would be loth to sip.

And her heart was stirred with a lightning love to its pith
For a newcomer who, while less in years, was one
Full eager and able to make her his own forthwith,
Restrained of none.

But she answered Nay, death-white; and still as he urged
She adversely spake, overmuch as she loved the while,
Till he pressed for why, and she led with the face of one scourged
To the neighbouring aisle,

And showed him the words, ever gleaming upon her pew,
Memorizing her there as the knight's eternal wife,
Or falsing such, debarred inheritance due
Of celestial life.

He blenched, and reproached her that one yet undeceased
Should bury her future—that future which none can spell;
And she wept, and purposed anon to inquire of the priest
If the price were hell

Of her wedding in face of the record. Her lover agreed,
And they parted before the brass with a shudderful kiss,
For it seemed to flash out on their impulse of passionate need,
'Mock ye not this!'

Well, the priest, whom more perceptions moved than one,
Said she erred at the first to have written as if she were dead
Her name and adjuration; but since it was done
Nought could be said

Save that she must abide by the pledge, for the peace of her soul,
And so, by her life, maintain the apostrophe good,
If she wished anon to reach the coveted goal
Of beatitude.

To erase from the consecrate text her prayer as there prayed
Would aver that, since earth's joys most drew her, past doubt,
Friends' prayers for her joy above by Jesu's aid
Could be done without.

Moreover she thought of the laughter, the shrug, the jibe
That would rise at her back in the nave when she should pass
As another's avowed by the words she had chosen to inscribe
On the changeless brass.

And so for months she replied to her Love: 'No, no';
While sorrow was gnawing her beauties ever and more,
Till he, long-suffering and weary, grew to show
Less warmth than before.

And, after an absence, wrote words absolute:
That he gave her till Midsummer morn to make her mind clear;
And that if, by then, she had not said Yea to his suit,
He would wed elsewhere.

Thenceon, at unwonted times through the lengthening days
She was seen in the church—at dawn, or when the sun dipt
And the moon rose, standing with hands joined, blank of gaze,
Before the script.

She thinned as he came not ; shrank like a creature that cowers
As summer drew nearer ; but yet had not promised to wed,
When, just at the zenith of June, in the still night hours,
She was missed from her bed.

'The church!' they whispered with qualms ; 'where often she sits.'
They found her : facing the brass there, else seeing none,
But feeling the words with her finger, gibbering in fits ;
But she knew them not one.

And so she remained, in her handmaids' charge ; late, soon,
Tracing words in the air with her finger, as seen that night—
Those incised on the brass—till at length unwatched one noon,
She vanished from sight.

And, as talebearers tell, thence on to her last-taken breath
Was unseen, save as wraith that in front of the brass made moan ;
So that ever the way of her life and the time of her death
Remained unknown.

And hence, as indited above, you may read even now
The quaint Church-text, with the date of her death left bare,
In the aged Estminster aisle, where folk yet bow
Themselves in prayer.

THOMAS HARDY

October 30, 1907.

NOTES

J. E. FLECKER

James Elroy Flecker was born 5 November 1884 at Lewisham, and educated at Dean Close School (Cheltenham) and Uppingham. He spent the years 1902–7 at Trinity College, Oxford, and, after an interval of teaching, another period at Caius College, Cambridge, in preparation for the Consular Service. He was sent to Constantinople in 1910, to Smyrna in 1911, and to Beyrout later in the same year. His health broke down, and from 1913 he spent his life at various health-resorts in Switzerland, dying at Davos on 3 January 1915. He published four books of poetry, and four of prose, between 1907 and 1915; two dramas have been published posthumously—*Hassan* (which has been put on the stage) and *Don Juan*.

Page 1, title. *Samarkand:* a city in Turkestan, famous in poetry and romance. It was said to have been founded by Alexander the Great (356–23 B. C.); it was made the capital of Timur the Great (1336–1405); but since then it has declined in importance.

Page 2, l. 40. *God's own Prophet:* Mahomet (*c.* 570–632).

l. 41. *peacock styles:* illuminated either in peacock colours or with peacocks in the margin.

l. 42. *Ali of Damascus:* no definite writer of this name is known.

ALFRED NOYES

Alfred Noyes was born in 1880 and was at Exeter College, Oxford. His first book of verse was published in 1902, and since then he has become one of the most widely known contemporary poets. *Drake: an English Epic* appeared in 1908. In 1913 he was made a Hon. Litt.D. by Yale University, and in the same year gave in America the Lowell Lectures on the Sea in English Poetry. He was temporarily attached to the British Foreign Office during the war, and in 1918 was made C.B.E. Besides verse he has written critical work (*William Morris; Aspects of Modern Poetry*), and a novel (*The Hidden Player*).

Page 5, title. *Drake.* Francis Drake (1540?–96) was one of the greatest seamen of the age of Elizabeth. After making several

voyages to the West Indies (1570–3), he set sail in December 1577, for the coast of Brazil, with five ships, his own *Pelican*, the *Elizabeth*, the *Marigold*, the *Swan*, and the *Christopher*. Only three reached the Straits of Magellan, between the mainland and Tierra del Fuego, on 20 August 1578, where the name of the *Pelican* was changed to the *Golden Hynde*, and of these three again one, the *Marigold*, was sunk at the exit from the Straits, and one, the *Elizabeth*, having lost sight of the *Golden Hynde*, had to return to England. Drake, in his single ship, proceeded up the coast, raiding the Spanish possessions, till he reached a point roughly identical with San Francisco; from which he stood out into the Pacific (23 July 1579). Nearly a year later he rounded the Cape of Good Hope (15 June 1580), and reached England again, laden with treasure, on 26 September 1580. He was knighted by the Queen on the deck of the *Golden Hynde*. The remaining sixteen years of his life were spent chiefly in raids against Spain in Europe and America. In 1588 he commanded one of the three divisions of the English fleet against the Armada. He died off Porto Bello, South America, 28 Jan. 1596.

l. 1. *Ophir:* the country from which gold was brought to King Solomon (1 Kings ix. 28, &c.); it is now generally supposed to have been Southern Arabia, but Eastern Africa, India, and the Malay Peninsula have also been suggested.

l. 24. *fabled Northern passage.* It was once supposed that there was a clear sea passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific, around the coast of North America. Drake proposed to attempt to return by this from the Pacific, but gave up the idea.

l. 27. *Guatulco:* a port on the south coast of Mexico.

PAGE 8, l. 96. *Cocytus* is the name given by Dante in the *Divine Comedy* to the ninth and lowest circle of hell in which traitors are punished, being plunged into a lake of ice. In the third ring of this circle those who slew their guests treacherously have only their faces showing above the ice, and their tears are frozen into a crystal mask (*Vision of Dante: Hell*, Canto 33, ll. 94–9, Cary's translation).

PAGE 13, l. 270. *angel of the Apocalypse:* Rev. x. 1, 2.

PAGE 15, l. 305. *Tom Moone:* captain of the *Christopher* till that ship was abandoned, then taken on board the *Golden Hynde;* the hero of various exploits against the Spaniards.

PAGE 16, l. 330. *Bess of Sydenham:* Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Sydenham, was married to Drake in 1585, as his second

wife. She survived him, and was afterwards married to Sir Thomas Courtenay, also of Devonshire.

J. C. SQUIRE

John Collings Squire was born at Plymouth, 2 April 1884, and educated at Blundell's and Cambridge. After some journalistic work he became literary editor (1913) and afterwards acting editor of the *New Statesman* (1917–18). In 1919 he founded the *London Mercury*, of which he remains the editor. He has twice stood for Parliament, but unsuccessfully. His publications include several volumes of verse, several of criticism, and one of short stories entitled *Grub Street Nights*. He has edited various anthologies, notably *A Book of Women's Verse* and *The Comic Muse*.

Page 17, ll. 17–23. *Thames and Severn* are the two chief rivers of England flowing, the former to the east and the North Sea, the latter to the west and the Bristol Channel; the *Tweed* forms part of the boundary between England and Scotland; the *Clyde*, on which stands Glasgow, flows through the Lowlands of Scotland westward into the Firth of Clyde; the *Rhine* rises in Switzerland and flows northward between France and Germany to the North Sea; the *Elbe* flows through Czecho-Slovakia and Germany to the North Sea; the *Seine*, on which Paris stands, flows through France to the English Channel; the *Isar* rises in the Alps and is a tributary of the Danube.

Page 18, ll. 33–9. The *Ebro* and *Guadiana* are rivers of Spain, the first flowing eastward into the Mediterranean, the second southward into the Atlantic. The *Congo*, *Nile*, *Niger*, and *Zambezi* are African; the Congo and the Niger flow into the Atlantic; the Nile northward into the Mediterranean; the Zambezi, in the south-east, into the Indian Ocean. The *Colorado*, in the United States, flows into the Gulf of California and the Pacific. The *Indus*, in India, rises in the Himalayas and flows from them to the Arabian Sea. The *Yellow River* (or Hwang-Ho) is one of the great rivers of China, rises in Tibet and issues in the Yellow Sea. The *Oxus*, or the Amu, a river of Central Asia, rises in the Hindu-Kush Mountains, and, after receiving many tributaries, passes with much difficulty through wide, sandy plains to the Sea of Aral. Cf. the lovely and famous description in Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, ll. 875–92.

l. 40. *the river that dies in sand:* many of the rivers of Central

Asia dry up during the summer, a common phenomenon which is here localized and made vivid by a reference to one river.

l. 49. *the Volga*, the greatest river of European Russia, flows into the Caspian Sea. Nijni Novgorod, which stands upon it in Central Russia, was famous for its great fairs. Astrakhan stands at the mouth, and is a trading centre.

l. 57. *Ganges* flows from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal.

PAGE 19, l. 65. *Brahmapootra*, rising 'beyond the white Himalayas', flows round their eastern end and issues also in the Bay of Bengal.

l. 73. *the Amazon*, stated to be the longest river in the world (about 4,000 miles) and not yet fully explored, rises in the Andes on the western coast of South America and, flowing right across that continent, empties itself in the North Atlantic.

PAGE 22, l. 158. *Chagford :* Devonshire village on Dartmoor, near river Teign.

l. 159. *Tavy Cleave :* a cleft or small gorge on Dartmoor.

l. 177. *Okement :* a river in the west of Devonshire, flowing north to the Torridge ; the *Erme* rises in Dartmoor, and flows south into the English Channel ; the *Avon*, in the south of Devonshire, flows south into Begbury Bay.

l. 178. *Exe :* a river rising in Exmoor and flowing into the English Channel at Exmouth.

PAGE 23, l. 181. *Tavistock :* a small town in Devon on river Tavy, fifteen miles north of Plymouth.

l. 183. *Lowman :* a tributary of the Exe.

ll. 197–8. *Abana . . . Pharpar.* The reference is to the story of Naaman (2 Kings v. 12), who thought that the rivers of his native land were better than those of any strange country, however blessed.

JOHN MASEFIELD

JOHN MASEFIELD, born in 1876, went to sea at the age of fourteen and spent years in ships and travelling on land. He finally settled in England, and gained both fame and notoriety by the publication of *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911), a poem describing the mystical conversion of a young rough. Other long narrative poems followed on this, notably *Reynard the Fox* (1919). MR. Masefield has also written novels, and written and produced plays both in verse and prose.

W. W. GIBSON

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson was born in 1878. Previous to the war he spent some time as a social worker in the East End of London; and served afterwards as a private in the British Army. He has written a number of poems, mostly dealing with the tragedies of industrial and peasant life, and published in volumes with such titles as *Daily Bread* (1910), *Livelihood* (1917), and *Neighbours* (1920).

HAROLD MONRO

Harold Monro was born in 1879, and educated at Radley and Caius College, Cambridge. His first book was published in 1906; and he later took part, with Mr. Edward Marsh, in commencing the publication of the volumes of *Georgian Poetry*. He also established the 'Poetry Bookshop' in Bloomsbury, and has done a great deal to make poetry as popular as it ever can or should be.

T. STURGE MOORE

Thomas Sturge Moore was born in 1870, and besides being a poet of considerable distinction is a wood-engraver, and has written several books of art criticism, including studies of Dürer and Correggio. A volume entitled *Some Soldier Poets* contains criticism of a number of young poets who fought in the war. His poetry is largely classical, both in matter and manner.

Page 50, title. *At Bethel:* cf. Genesis xxxii (and for the complete story, xxvii–xxxiii).

l. 1. *Gabriel*, *Abdiel:* Gabriel is the name attributed to one of the superior archangels in Jewish and Christian angelology; he was the angel of the Annunciation, St. Luke i. 26, and is also spoken of in Daniel viii. 16 and ix. 21, and in St. Luke i. 19. The name means 'man of God'. Abdiel is a name meaning 'servant of God', but only attributed in the Bible to men (as in 1 Chron. v. 15). It was given by Milton to the seraph who defied the revolting host of Satan (*Par. Lost*, Book V, ll. 800–904) and is perhaps indicated by the use of the name in the present poem.

l. 4. *by a ladder:* cf. Genesis xxviii. 11, 12.

l. 9. *Haran.* A city of Mesopotamia, south-east of Edessa.

Bethel. A city of Palestine, north of Jerusalem.

Page 51, l. 55. *met him there:* cf. Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.

PAGE 56, l. 213. *the ford Jabbok:* the Jabbok flows into the Jordan, twenty-four miles north of the Dead Sea.

PAGE 58, l. 275. *Enoch:* cf. Gen. v. 18, 21–4.

EDWARD THOMAS

PHILIP EDWARD THOMAS was born in 1878 and educated at St. Paul's School and Lincoln College, Oxford. He served during the war with the Artists' Rifles, and was killed in action in April, 1917. He had been known as a critic and essayist, but hardly any of his verse appeared in print during his life, and its value was only realized with the posthumously published *Poems* (1917) and *Last Poems* (1918). Few other poets have expressed English country-life so simply, so entirely, and so passionately. Of this expression 'Lob' is an admirable example.

PAGE 61–5. To give the situation of the villages and other places mentioned in this poem, if indeed they exist, would be to provide the most futile of notes. English place-names, English proverbs and sayings, English names for flowers and birds, English folk-tales, and English history, are here gathered into a poem which is itself a remarkable enlargement of the English mind. *Lob* does not, of course, contain the whole English tradition, but it is a perfect expression of a part of it. It does not therefore matter whether there is a Canterbury (as there is) or a king's daughter of Canterbury (as there is not); they are alike incidents in the English fantasy. The few notes which follow are only references to works as English as *Lob*.

PAGE 61, title. *Lob.* One of the names given to a half-fairy, half-human figure who is known also as Puck, Robin Goodfellow, and Hobgoblin. He appears as Puck in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

PAGE 63, l. 65. *herbal Gerard.* John Gerard (1545–1612) is best known for his *Herball* (1597), a volume upon the plants of England, which includes a great deal of folk-lore and rural tradition.

PAGE 64, l. 96. *tall Tom.* A reference to the song at the end of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*.

l. 99. *Herne the Hunter:* cf. Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV. iii. 29–41.

G. K. CHESTERTON

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON was born at Campden Hill, Kensington, in 1874, and was educated at St. Paul's School. He attended classes at the Slade School of Art, and afterwards turned to journalism. He was concerned in the starting of the *Eyewitness* (1911); this has of late been revived under the title of *G. K.'s Weekly*, of which he is the editor. His books—novels, criticism, history, travel, short stories, (above all) poetry—are all an expression of his passionate and mystical democracy, and of the supernatural humanism of the Roman Catholic Church. Perhaps the greatest of them is *The Ballad of the White Horse*, in which the extract given is Book IV.

PAGE 66, l. 5. *the King.* Alfred (849–901), after his traditional visit to the Danish camp.

l. 12. *Guthrum.* The Danish leader; he had made himself King of East Anglia (approximately made up of the present Norfolk and Suffolk) in 870, and invaded Wessex (South England, between Cornwall and Sussex) in 871. He defeated Alfred at Wilton, 871, and Chippenham (both in Wiltshire), 878, after which Alfred withdrew to the Isle of Athelney in Somerset.

l. 13. *Ethandune.* Probably in Wiltshire, the scene of Alfred's victory.

l. 26. *Ashdown.* Near Reading, in Berkshire; Alfred had defeated Guthrum here in 871, as captain for his brother King Ethelred (d. 871).

PAGE 67, ll. 55–7. *Mark . . . Colan . . . Eldred.* These three represent, in the poem, the three traditions in the English mind, the Roman, the Celtic, and the Saxon.

ALFRED NOYES

(*For Biographical Note see p. 123*)

PAGE 77, title. *Sir John* (*Frederick William*) *Herschel* (1792–1871), astronomer, and the son of an astronomer, Sir William Herschel (1738–1822).

l. 10. *Octagon Chapel*, in Bath, where William Herschel became organist in 1766.

PAGE 78, l. 28. *a music-master's purse.* William Herschel from 1760 to 1765 was a teacher of music at Doncaster.

l. 31. *Newton:* Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), mathematician and natural philosopher, made his first reflecting telescope in 1668.

l. 37. *Aunt Caroline :* Caroline Herschel (1750–1848), sister of William Herschel, herself an astronomer.

l. 52. *Cervantes* (1547–1616): the reference is to the famous episode in *Don Quixote* (Part I, chap. viii), where the Don charges at a windmill, believing it to be a giant.

Page 79, l. 58. *lamp-micrometer :* a micrometer is an instrument affixed to the telescope for the purpose of measuring very small angular distances.

l. 72. *the royal command :* the story is told by Sir William Herschel to his sister as follows (3 July 1782): 'This evening, as the king and queen are gone to Kew, the princesses were desirous of seeing my telescope, but wanted to know if it was possible to see without going on the grass, and were much pleased when they heard that my telescope could be carried into any place they liked best to have it. About eight o'clock it was moved into the queen's apartments, and we waited some time in hopes of seeing *Jupiter* or *Saturn*. Meanwhile I showed the princesses, and several other ladies who were present, the speculum, the micrometers, the movements of the telescopes, and other things that seemed to excite their curiosity. When the evening appeared to be totally unpromising, I proposed an artificial *Saturn* as an object, since we could not have the real one. I had beforehand prepared this little piece, as I guessed by the appearance of the weather in the afternoon we should have no stars to look at. This being accepted with great pleasure, I had the lamps lighted up which illuminated the picture of a *Saturn* (cut out in pasteboard) at the bottom of the garden wall. The effect was fine, and so natural that the best astronomer might have been deceived. Their royal highnesses and other ladies seemed to be much pleased with the artifice.'—E. S. Holden, *Sir William Herschel* (1881).

l. 75. *'Canute me no Canutes' :* William Herschel was not to be baffled by the forces of nature, as Canute was when he ordered the sea to flow back from his chair.

l. 82. *Herne the Hunter :* cf. *Lob*, p. 64, l. 99.

l. 83. *Falstaff :* Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Parts 1 and 2; and in particular for the further allusion in this line, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, v. v. 87–8.

Page 80, l. 89. *Lucretius :* Titus Lucretius Carus (? 94 B. C.–? 50 B. C.), one of the greatest Roman poets, wrote the *De Rerum*

Natura, On the Nature of Things, of which the third book opens with praise of the Greek philosopher, Epicurus, the poet's master in doctrine.

l. 107. *Kepler :* Johann Kepler (1571–1630), who worked out the principles and figures upon which Newton afterwards based the laws of planetary motion.

l. 109. *Tycho :* Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), a Dane, was one of the earliest astronomers to observe and record accurately. He was a friend of Kepler.

Page 82, l. 144. *Adams :* John Couch Adams (1819-92) when at St. John's College, Cambridge, at the age of 22, perceived in 1841 that the irregularities in motion of the planet Uranus were due to the presence of another planet, not yet discovered. In 1845 he sent to Sir George Airy the solution of the problem ; in 1846 the French astronomer Le Verrier announced a similar conclusion, and, working on his indications, the German Galle, at Berlin, on 23 September 1846, discovered the planet Neptune.

l. 155. *Newton's law :* Newton defined the laws of planetary motion in his *Principia, or Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, published in 1687.

Page 83, l. 185. *the drifts that broke Napoleon's pride :* in the Retreat from Moscow, 1812.

Page 84, l. 207. *Greenwich :* the Royal Observatory at Greenwich was founded by Charles II in 1675.

l. 211. *Airy :* Sir George Biddell Airy (1801–92), astronomer royal. He took no action on receipt of Adams's paper until Le Verrier's deduction was announced.

l. 217. *Challis :* James Challis (1803–82), astronomer, who was searching for the hypothetical planet when the news of Galle's discovery arrived.

l. 219. *Galle :* see note on p. 81, l. 144.

Pages 86–8. The seven singers, excluding the Sun, are seven of the eight greater planets, Mercury, whose position is between Venus and the Sun, being omitted. The order of the planets and their respective approximate distances from the Sun (in millions of miles) are as follows : Mercury (35), Venus (66), the Earth (91), Mars (139), Jupiter (475), Saturn (872), Uranus (1,752), Neptune (2,746).

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

Francis Ledwidge was born in 1891, of peasant stock. He was 'discovered' and encouraged by Lord Dunsany, and in 1915 published *Songs of the Fields*. *Songs of Peace* followed in 1917, and in July of the same year the young poet, then a lance-corporal in the Inniskilling Fusiliers, was killed in action. A posthumous volume, *Last Songs*, was published in 1918.

Page 89, title. *Artemis:* goddess of the hunt, virginity, and the moon, according to the Greek imagination.

l. 22. *Iris:* the messenger of Hera, who was the queen of heaven and wife of Zeus, the greatest of the gods.

Page 90, l. 36. *Io*, priestess at the Greek city of Argos, was persecuted by the jealousy of Hera, and in the shape of a heifer was driven by a gadfly over a great part of the earth.

l. 55. *Ganymede:* a beautiful youth, carried up to Olympus by Zeus to be cup-bearer to the gods.

l. 58. *Olympus:* a mountain in Greece, between Macedonia and Thessaly, upon the summit of which were supposed to be the palaces of the gods.

l. 59. *Lethe:* one of the rivers of Hades, the place of shadows, the waters of which if drunk caused entire forgetfulness.

Page 95, l. 205. *Mars:* god of war.

RUDYARD KIPLING

Rudyard Kipling, born in Bombay in 1865, and educated at the United Services College, Westward Ho, N. Devon, began writing for Anglo-Indian periodicals 1882–9, and became famous in England by his first thin volumes of prose. He has travelled in all parts of the world. In 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. His short stories include the famous *Jungle Books*, *Stalky and Co.*, and *Puck of Pook's Hill*; of his novels *Kim*, a tale of the Road in India, is the most famous. His verse, however, remains perhaps his most important, certainly his most popular, achievement.

Page 102, title. *Suttee:* the custom by which the women-folk of a dead king were burned in his funeral pile.

ll. 10–11. *Ulwar . . . Tonk . . . Mewar . . . Marwar:* divisions and states of Rajputana.

l. 10. *jezail:* a long heavy musket.

l. 17. *Boondi :* another division of Rajputana.

l. 21. *Malwa plains :* a hilly tableland in Rajputana, the name being sometimes extended to include the Nerbudda valley.

Abu : Mount Abu, in Southern Rajputana, is a detached spur of the Aravalli range, its various peaks ranging from 4,000 to 5,653 feet.

Page 105, l. 100. *Thakur* is a title used for Rajput chiefs.

AUSTIN DOBSON

Henry Austin Dobson, born at Plymouth in 1840, was educated at Coventry and Strasbourg (then, as now, a part of France). He entered the Civil Service as a Clerk in the Board of Trade in 1856, and in 1864 his first poem appeared in *Temple Bar*. From 1868 onward he contributed an increasing number of poems and prose studies to various periodicals, and wrote also lives of Hogarth, Walpole, Fielding, and other 18th-century notabilities. He became a Principal in the Board of Trade in 1885 and retired in 1901. He died in September 1921.

Page 106, l. 8. *Marybone* (Marylebone) : now a district of north-western London, but in 1739 a village outside the capital.

l. 10. *Porto-Bello.* During the war with Spain which began in 1739, Admiral Vernon was sent against the Spanish South American colonies, and took Porto Bello in 1739. The novelist Smollett (1721–71) served on this expedition.

l. 11. *Whitefield :* George Whitefield (1714–70) was associated with John and Charles Wesley, though he afterwards separated from them on points of doctrine. He was the first to begin open-air preaching.

Page 107, l. 32. *Plymouth Fly :* a Fly was a stage coach, so called to suggest extraordinary quickness in travelling.

l. 33. *Bagshot Heath :* in Surrey, on the Bath Road, south-west of Windsor.

Page 108, l. 57. *Bragg's :* Colonel Philip Bragg was appointed in 1734 to command the 28th Foot, which were afterwards known as 'the Old Braggs'.

l. 75. *flashed the pan :* 'to flash the pan' was to kindle the powder without discharging the gun.

Page 109, l. 98. *Vernon,* Edward (1684–1757). See note to l. 10.

PAGE 110, l. 111. *Malplaquet:* fought by the Duke of Marlborough against the French in 1709.

PAGE 111, l. 132. *London-Spaw:* Spa Fields, near Islington, much infested, *c.* 1733–48, by footpads. Sir Mungo Mucklethraw, so far as is known, is an unhistorical personage, invented for the sake of the rhyme.

PAGE 112, l. 161. *Portugal Street:* there were three Portugal Streets in London, all named after the Portuguese queen of Charles II. These were (1) a part of Piccadilly; (2) Portugal Street, Grosvenor Square; (3) Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Probably the last is meant.

l. 170. *Hogarth:* William Hogarth (1697–1764) was the greatest of English engravers and the greatest English satirist in line and colour. The 'milkmaid' is probably the one in his *Enraged Musician.*

l. 180. *St. James's-Street* runs northward from St. James's Palace to Piccadilly.

White's: Francis White (d. 1711) set up a chocolate-house in 1693 in St. James's Street. This, like similar houses originally established for the supply of coffee or chocolate, became a resort of the fashionable world and a centre for parties and clubs. 'White's' was a particularly exclusive house.

PAGE 113, l. 181. *Tyburn Tree:* originally elm trees on the banks of the (no longer existing) Tyburn river, used as gallows for execution; then metaphorically for the gallows itself when the place of execution was moved to the angle of the Edgware and Bayswater roads.

l. 184. *St. Sepulchre's:* a church diagonally opposite to Newgate, where the journey to Tyburn would begin.

l. 185. *Holborn Bar* (properly Bars), a toll-bar, close to Gray's Inn, marking the western termination of the City Liberties.

l. 192. *Topsman:* originally a head man or principal servant; then, in colloquial talk, a hangman.

RUPERT BROOKE

RUPERT BROOKE was born in 1887 at Rugby, where also he was educated. In 1906 he went to King's College, Cambridge. A volume of poems appeared in 1911, and in 1912 he finished a study of John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama. In 1912 also he made the acquaintance of Henry James, whose own last piece of writing was

to be the preface to Brooke's *Letters from America*; and, with Mr. Edward Marsh and others, initiated the first issue of *Georgian Poetry*. 1913 was spent travelling in America and the Pacific. In September 1914 he accepted a commission in the Royal Naval Division and took part in the expedition to Antwerp. The Division was sent to the Eastern Mediterranean, where he fell ill and died on 23 April at Lemnos.

PAGE 114, title. *Grantchester:* a village about two miles south of Cambridge.

PAGE 115, l. 30. *Hesper:* Hesperus, the evening star, a name given to Venus in a certain position.

l. 31. *Haslingfield and Coton.* These villages, and those named in ll. 81–98 and 128, lie around and near Cambridge.

l. 41. *the Goat-foot:* Pan, the god of wild Nature, in the Greek imagination was presented from the thighs downward as a goat, but upward as a man. He played on a set of reeds arranged to produce music when breathed through—the pipes of Pan (a phrase now become abominable by its too-frequent and too-cheap use).

l. 50. *His ghostly Lordship:* George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788–1824) was noted for his swimming as well as for his poetry and his romanticism. A pool at Grantchester is still called by his name. He swam the Hellespont (the strait between Europe and Asia, to the west of Constantinople) on 3 May 1810.

l. 52. *Styx:* the river that bounded the place of shadows in the Greek tradition, across which the souls of men were ferried after death.

l. 53. *Dan Chaucer* (1340?–1400): the poet's name was Geoffrey; 'Dan', from the Latin 'Dominus', 'lord', was a title applied (*a*) to men of religious orders, (*b*) to distinguished knights, poets, &c. The modern application to Chaucer began with Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV. ii. 32. The reference here is to the first three lines of the Reeve's Tale in the *Canterbury Tales*.

l. 55. *Tennyson* (1809–92): there seems to be no such exact reference to any line in Tennyson's poems as to Chaucer; but the *Life* by his son records that 'he would go any distance to see "a bubbling brook". "Somehow", he would say, "water is the element loveliest of all the four."'

THOMAS HARDY

The best account of Thomas Hardy (on whom the Order of Merit was bestowed in 1910) can be given by quoting extracts from his own summary in *Who's Who*: 'author (prose 25 years, verse 28 years); b. Dorsetshire, 2 June 1840. Pupil of John Hicks, ecclesiastical architect, 1856-61; sketched and measured many old country churches now pulled down or altered; prizeman of Royal Institute of British Architects, 1863; wrote verses, 1860–8; gave up verse for prose, 1868–70; but resumed it later. Member of the Council of Justice to Animals; is against blood-sport, dog-chaining, and the caging of birds.' The references to verse and prose in this summary convey and conceal the fact that Mr. Hardy, having achieved between 1870 and 1897 a European reputation for his novels, has since acquired another for his poetry. Among the more important of the novels are the *Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1884–5), *The Woodlanders* (1886–7), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891).

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